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The Lord Mayor
and
Aldermen of London
during the
Tudor Period

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Philosophy of the University
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CHAPTER I.

THE CITY.

During the Tudor period London attained that definite preëminence, intellectually, commercially, socially, and politically which it has ever since retained. The Lord Mayor and Aldermen are as familiar personages in the Elizabethan drama as they are in the statutes of the realm, in the charters of the commercial companies, in the observation of foreign visitors and in the attention of the sovereign and the privy council. The form of government was by this time definitely established. The city had, however, no especial document which defined its rights and privileges, determined its government, or prescribed the manner of election of its officials. Instead, it had a great body of separate charters which had been granted to it from time to time by succeeding sovereigns, around which many traditions and customs had grown. A survey of these charters, from that of the Conqueror with its meager and indefinite grant, to that of Edward VI with its gift of Southwark, shows how, little by little, the constitutional powers of the city had grown.

Besides the promise that the son should succeed to his father's advantages, William I granted to the city the privilege that its burghers, French and English, should be considered law worthy.¹ An undated charter granted by Henry I to the city added considerably to the privileges of the Londoners.² By this document London was recognized as a unity, distinct and separate from the shire in which it was situated, and was placed upon a footing similar to that of the countries of the realm. More privileged than the shires, however, it was given Middlesex to farm, with the privilege of electing its sheriff and justices. It was also declared free from the jurisdiction of all officials

¹*Historical Charters* (ed. Birch), 1.

²*Ibid.*, 3.

except those of its own choice. In addition, the Londoners were exempt from toll throughout England.

Following these grants of Henry, there was no great enlargement of the privileges of the city until the time of John. Except for the grant of the conservancy of the Thames by Richard,³ the charters given by Henry II, without date, and Richard I in 1194,⁴ were in a large measure confirmatory grants of exemption from toll. With the fifth charter given by John in 1115 the citizens were authorized to choose their mayor. They were permitted to keep him in office for as long a period as they desired, removing him at the end of a year if they saw fit, or retaining him for a longer time if they wished. It was necessary, however, that he should be presented to the king, or, in case of his absence, to the justiciar, when the oath of loyalty should be administered to him.⁵

After this a considerable period of time again elapsed before any marked additions were made to the municipal privileges. It was in 1327, over a century later, that Edward III gave to the city the first of his important charters. While a number of royal grants had been made to the city by intervening sovereigns, they were, on the whole, merely confirmatory. During Henry III's long reign nine separate charters were given to the city, five in 1227, and one in 1247, in 1253, in 1266 and in 1268.⁶ Edward I in 1298, for the greater convenience of the citizens, declared that they might present the mayor and sheriffs to the constable of Tower, in case the king and the barons of the exchequer should be absent from Westminster.⁷ The first charter of Edward II in 1319 consisted of a number of articles which had been agreed upon by the citizens, and which, being submitted to the king for confirmation, had been ratified by him. These articles refer to the election and duties of the officers of the city and to the admission to the

³*Historical Charters*, 9.

⁴*Ibid.*, 4-10.

⁵*Ibid.*, 19.

⁶*Ibid.*, 21-30, 32, 34, 36, 38.

⁷*Ibid.*, 43.

freedom of the city.⁸ The following year Edward granted a second charter, which declared that the military service rendered by the citizens of London in besieging the castle of Leeds in Kent should not be used as a precedent.⁹ With the first charter of Edward III the freedom of the city, regarding the non-entrance of crown officials was enhanced by making the mayor not only one of the justices of jail delivery of Newgate, but escheator and clerk of the market.

The exemption of the city from the interference of royal officials was not again increased until Edward IV's reign. Prior to this time Edward III had granted five additional charters, in 1327, 1337, 1354, and two in 1376.¹⁰ According to the grant of 1327 the citizens were given some slight control over Southwark, but the others, as well as the grants made by Richard II in 1377 and 1383,¹¹ added but little to the privileges of the citizens. In 1462, however, it was declared that the mayor, recorder, and those aldermen who had served as mayor should be justices of the peace and justices of oyer and terminer for London.¹² The same charter confirmed the grant of the Borough of Southwark with the right of waifs, strays and treasure trove and the assize of bread and beer. The citizens were also granted the right of holding an annual fair within the borough, with a court of Pie powder.¹³ Yet another privilege was added by Edward's fourth charter, granted in 1478, which declared that no royal coroner might enter the city, as the right of appointing such officers belonged to the mayor and citizens.¹⁴ At the same time the officers of package, scavage, carriage, portage and garbling were granted to the city.¹⁵ By the first charter of the same king tronage had been given to London. Henry VII in 1504 added the office of gauger to this list, at the same time

⁸*Historical Charters*, 45-50.

⁹*Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 59, 61, 63, 65.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 69, 71.

¹²*Ibid.*, 75.

¹³*Ibid.*, 80, 82.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 92.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 91.

confirming the mayor's right to exact forfeiture from all merchant strangers trafficking by wholesale within the city with the intention of selling again.¹⁶

Henry VIII gave two charters to the citizens, in 1518 and 1531.¹⁷ The first declared that the justices of oyer and terminer should hold their inquisitions in the Guildhall or any other place which the justices should think convenient. The third dealt with the office of tronage. This had been granted to the city by Henry IV, Edward IV, yet in 1521 Henry VIII granted the great beam and common balance to Sir William Sidney, who kept in for ten years. At the end of that time he returned the gift to the king, in order that it might again be given to the city. By the charter of 1531 Henry declared that the office of ancient right belonged to the citizens. This was practically the last grant of privilege prior to the end of the Tudor rule, for the charter of Edward VI, though granting the much needed jurisdiction over Southwark, gave to the city no additional privileges of government.¹⁸

That the citizens held the charters in great esteem may be readily seen in the energy they displayed in resenting any act which seemed to infringe upon their immunities or rights. The privy council learning, in 1579, that the mayor was not carrying out to its full extent Elizabeth's proclamation against eating of meat during Lent, attempted to send some of the crown officials into London to examine into the matter. They were compelled to retire, however, on account of the great opposition of the citizens. Later the privy council wrote to the mayor that, as the lords were loath to prejudice the Londoners in their government and liberties, they would be satisfied if he would send to them an account of the steps he had taken to prevent the proclamation's being broken.¹⁹ Again in 1580, when troops were being levied, a commission was sent to the city as a town corporate instead of as a shire. The mayor refused to act upon

¹⁶*Historical Charters*, 95.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 97, 99.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 111-127.

¹⁹*Acts of the Privy Council, 1578-1580*, 14.

it and sent a letter to the Lord Chancellor urging that a new commission be issued. The next day the mayor wrote to Sir Francis Walsingham that the Lord Chancellor had declared that, in his opinion, a new commission should be issued.²⁰

In order to understand the duties and work of the officials of London it is necessary to know something of the city itself; its extent; its division into wards; its inhabitants, its citizens and apprentices, and their treatment of the strangers. We are fortunate in having the material for obtaining a good idea of the extent of the city in the Tudor period in Stow's "Survey" and in a series of contemporary maps. In Agas's and Norton's maps the walls of the city show so plainly that the distinction between "London without the walls and London within the walls"²¹ can be easily understood. The latter part of the expression refers to the land outside the walls, which it was necessary for the city to possess for its own protection. By the time of Henry VIII the jurisdiction of the city extended two miles beyond the walls.²² The limits were determined in a large measure by the six gates which were still standing at this time. The bars without Aldgate, Bishopsgate, Aldersgate and Ludgate as well as Temple Bar determined the extent of the city's jurisdiction.²³ Without Cripplegate and Moregate were the posts which marked the limits of the city to the north.²⁴ With these marks as guides the extent of the city, except for the part nearest the Tower, was well defined.

The indefinite marking of the city's limits at this place led to frequent strife between the mayor and the lieutenant of the Tower. When these disagreements reached serious proportions, the privy council took control. Thus in 1552 the council appointed a committee to examine into the quarrel and arrange a means of bringing it to a speedy conclusion.²⁵ In 1565 an

²⁰*Remembrancia*, 231.

²¹Camden, *Britannia*, 391.

²²*Statutes of the Realm*, 14, 15, H. VIII, 2.

²³Stow, *Survey of London*, 145, 179, 291, 344.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 281, 280.

²⁵A. P. C., 1552-1554, 88, 115.

extended dispute arose on account of the mayor's order that his sword of state should precede him to the gate of the Tower. As the lieutenant considered the gate within his jurisdiction, he ordered the sword to be lowered.²⁶ The mayor complained to the lords of the council, who directed each of the contestants to respect the other's liberties until the dispute could be satisfactorily arranged.²⁷ The matter could not have been definitely settled, for in 1582 the mayor's sword was again the cause of contention. That year the mayor took his oath of office at the Tower, at the gate of which the wardens compelled the sword bearer to lower the mayor's sign of authority.²⁸ The lieutenant must have felt that the lords of the council were looking at the matter from his point of view, for less than a month later he was particularly daring in asserting his claims to the land. At the perambulation which was taken in November for the purpose of marking off the limits of the lieutenant's authority, he had pales and rails broken in gardens belonging to Londoners. So incensed were the people that it was with difficulty that a general rising of the citizens against the lieutenant was averted.²⁹ In spite of these grievances the question remained unsettled, and the year following the discussion broke out again. At this time it was the lieutenant who felt himself aggrieved. He complained to the council regarding the mayor's act of leasing the land on Tower Hill. He not only claimed that such an act was an infringement upon his jurisdiction, but also complained of the fact that persons to whom the land had been leased had built stables there. This he regarded as dangerous to the imperial castle.³⁰ Almost ten years after this the old animosity broke out again. The dispute at this time had arisen from the arrest for debt of one of the wardens of the Tower by the sheriffs of London. Immediately after three citizens of London were seized by the lieutenant of the Tower by writ of *withernam*.

²⁶A. P. C., 1558-1570, 266.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 1558-1570, 309.

²⁸Remem., 429.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 434.

³⁰*Calendar of State Papers*, 1581-1590, 218.

The city gained its point at this time, for the privy council ordered the release of the Londoners and the detention of the warden until his debt should be paid.³¹ A few years later persons were imprisoned by the officers of both districts on account of the discussion regarding the ownership of the land. As a result of this the privy council took some definite action. The recorder and chamberlain of the city were summoned before them, and the matter was discussed with two members of the council. The result of the conference was that both the mayor and the lords were ordered to free their respective prisoners.³² As there was no further discussion of the question during this period, it is judged that this conference reached satisfactory conclusions.

In addition to the strife over the boundary at this eastern limit of the city, there was occasionally some contest over the mayor's jurisdiction over Southwark. During the later Tudor period the Londoners tried to make that part of Southwark which had been granted to them what Edward had evidently intended by his charter³³—a corporate part of the city. London bridge offered so easy a means of escape for the criminals that it was imperative that the mayor's power extend into that part of "the borough"³⁴ which was directly connected with the bridge. Hence the citizens were perfectly willing to pay the king the money he asked for the land. The charter granting them the land gave them the additional privilege of appointing the coroners and constables for the district, and of imprisoning thieves in Newgate. The fact that the borough was located in the county of Surrey gave rise to considerable difficulty at times when it was necessary to make drafts for service in the army. In January, 1558, letters were sent by the privy council to the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, stating that complaints were coming from the inhabitants of the borough because, although pressed

³¹A. P. C. 1596-1597, 413.

³²*Ibid.*

³³Historical Charters, III.

³⁴In all contemporary records Southwark is spoken of as "The Borough of Southwark."

into service by the Londoners, they were also charged with the levies made by Surrey. The council, accordingly, directed the lieutenant to release all those who, dwelling within the liberties of London, had been appointed to serve by the city.³⁵

In 1590 the justices of the peace of Surrey and the Lord Mayor of London had an extended argument over land which was claimed by each set of officers as appertaining to its jurisdiction. The justices declared that the Lord Mayor was exceeding the limits of the charter, while the city officials complained that the shire officials had asserted authority over land over which they had no control.³⁶ The committee appointed by the privy council to determine the contest must have reported in favor of London, for a month later the council wrote to the mayor authorizing him to arrest any butchers dwelling in Southwark who were guilty of violating Elizabeth's proclamation regarding the sale of meat during Lent.³⁷ And again a year later the council wrote to the Lord Admiral stating that as the Lord Mayor claimed to have jurisdiction in part of Southwark he was to prevent his officials from proceeding to any executions in that part of the borough which appertained to the city.³⁸

The question of jurisdiction was not limited to the external boundaries of the city. Within London there were certain places over which the mayor had no control. These districts were either dissolved monasteries and the lands belonging to them, or lands which had come into the possession of the crown in some other way. The inhabitants of these districts jealously guarded their rights, and strife was bound to ensue. For this there were several causes—the escape of prisoners from the arm of municipal justice to the security of the liberties; the calling upon the inhabitants of the privileged districts to contribute to the number of soldiers which London was compelled to raise in time of war; and the conflict of opinion regarding the spot

³⁵A. P. C., 1556-1558, 241.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 1589-1590, 370.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 1590-1591, 322.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 1590-1591, 307.

where the jurisdiction of the head officer of the specified district began and the mayor's ended.

In an undated petition of Elizabeth's reign the Lord Mayor urged the privy council to appoint two chief justices to examine into the rights, the franchises and the liberties of the lately dissolved monasteries of Black Friars, White Friars and Christ Church, as these districts were the resort of criminals and seditious persons.³⁹ Several times between 1574 and 1580 the privy council was called upon to settle disputes between White Friars and the city.⁴⁰ In order to adjust the matter the lords of the council called representatives of each district before them,⁴¹ but no conclusion seems to have been reached, for in 1580 the inhabitants refused to admit the mayor's officers, declaring they held directly from the queen.⁴²

While the dissolved monasteries offered themselves as places of refuge to persons desirous of avoiding the municipal officers, it was to "Cold Harbor" that the greatest number of criminals betook themselves in order to escape the jurisdiction of the city courts.⁴³ This house, coming into the hands of Henry VIII, was given to him by Doctor Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, in exchange for Durham House on the Strand.⁴⁴ When the bishop was condemned in Edward's time the land came again into royal hands. The young king gave it to the Earl of Shrewsbury, who with a large following frequently spent several days at the place. The size of the house can be judged by the number of men who accompanied the earl on these visits to his house, in 1554 there were sixscore horse, and thirty men with him, and in 1569 there were a hundred men accompanying him.⁴⁵ The house was destroyed by his heir, who built in its place a number of small tenements, which he leased to all sorts and conditions of people.⁴⁶

³⁹ Historical MSS, Commissioners' Report, Salisbury Papers, VII, 665.

⁴⁰ A. P. C., 1571-1575, 240, 257.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1577-1578, 429.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 1580-1581, 19.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1597-1598, 424, 410.

⁴⁴ Stow, *l. c.*, 237; Wriothesley *Chronicle*, II, 65.

⁴⁵ Machyn's Diary, 74, 224, 258, 300.

⁴⁶ Hist. MSS, Com., Salisbury Papers, V, 139.

There are frequent references to the district as a place of refuge in the dramas of the period.⁴⁷ In Middleton's play, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, Lucre says to his nephew:

"Fear neither beadle nor summoner, an uncle's house
A very Cold Harbor!"⁴⁸

In 1580 Burghley complained to the alderman of Aldersgate Ward regarding the entrance of his deputy into the liberty of Saint Martin le Grand, in order to impress men into service in the army. He demanded that steps be taken to prevent such action in the future, as the place was no part of the city liberty.⁴⁹ But during the war with Spain, when the Lord Mayor was required to raise a large number of men to aid in the defense of the kingdom, letters were sent by the privy council to the officers of all the privileged districts bidding them contribute to the levy. In 1588, when the Spanish invasion of England seemed imminent, the mayor was ordered to raise 10,000 men.⁵⁰ A year later the mayor was again authorized to enter the privileged districts, but was permitted to levy a specified number only from each district. In 1597 the liberty of Saint Katherine's alone was called upon to aid the city in obtaining the required number of men for the levy.⁵¹ When great levies of men were made in 1598 for the army to be sent to Ireland it was learned that the privileged districts not only refused to contribute, but they harbored those persons who, seeking to avoid impressment, had had recourse thither. The privy council therefore directed the mayor to require the officers of the liberties not only to supply men and money, but also to deliver to him any persons who should be hiding themselves there.⁵²

With regard to the question of ownership of adjacent property there was apt to be considerable bitterness. In 1589 the

⁴⁷Stow (ed. 1633), 80.

⁴⁸Jonson, *The Silent Woman*, II, 3; Middleton, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, II, 1.

⁴⁹Remem., 458.

⁵⁰A. P. C., 1587-1588, 428.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 1588-1589, 118.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 1598-1599, 414, 415.

strife between the company of goldsmiths and the Dean of St. Paul's was particularly intense. The dispute was due to some land near a stone wall which was claimed by each. When brought up for trial it was decided by the jury that the land belonged to the dean and chapter, as they had held it for 400 years.⁵³

In 1597 Lord Rich in writing to Sir Robert Cecil stated that he had been informed that during his absence the Lord Mayor had made complaints against certain of his tenants, who had been building in the liberty of St. Bartholomew. He urged that the suit might be delayed until he could be present to answer for his tenants.⁵⁴

Although the solution of the problem was not reached strictly within the Tudor period, it was in 1608, but a few years after the death of Elizabeth, that James, evidently realizing the anomalous conditions, enlarged the limits of the civic jurisdiction by comprising within it Blackfriars, Whitefriars, Cold Harbor, Great and Little St. Bartholomew, and Duke's Place.

Turning now to that part of London which was under the control of the city, we find that, for municipal purposes, it was divided into twenty-six wards of various sizes and unequal shapes. Prior to the reign of Richard II there were but twenty-four, but in 1393 Farringdon ward was divided into two parts.⁵⁵ No further change took place in the number until 1550, when Southwark was purchased and "Bridge Ward Without" was formed.⁵⁶ This ward, however, never attained an equal footing with the older districts. Though represented in the court of aldermen, its alderman was not elected as were those of the other wards. In addition to this it was without representation in the court of common council.⁵⁷

The wards were represented in the general municipal gov-

⁵³A. P. C., 1588-1589, 130.

⁵⁴Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VIII, 429.

⁵⁵Parliamentary Rolls, 17 R. II, 12.

⁵⁶Hist. Charters, 110.

⁵⁷Stow, 382.

ernment in two ways. The chamber of aldermen was composed of twenty-six members,⁵⁸ each representing one of the wards. The chamber of common council consisted of 214 members, the representation varying in different wards.⁵⁹ No ward had less than four representatives, while two had sixteen, and several had six, eight and nine.

In addition to its participation in the general government, each ward had its own set of officials residing in the ward.⁶⁰ Usually there was but one alderman's deputy for each ward, but in Bridge Ward Without there were three, and in Bishopsgate⁶¹ there were two, one acting for the alderman without and the other acting for him within the walls. Then there were the constables of the wards, differing greatly in number.⁶² In certain parts of the city there were as many as sixteen or seventeen constables to a ward, while Cornhill⁶³ and Lime Street Ward⁶⁴ had but four each. The number of scavengers differed with each ward, as did also the wardmotemen.⁶⁵

At the close of his description of each ward, Stow gives the amount at which it was rated for the collection of the fifteenth. These figures show that some few of the wards were required to advance more when the money was for the use of the city, than they did when a subsidy for the use of the nation was collected. Sometimes the difference was slight, 5, 6 or 10 shillings more being paid to the chamber of London than to the exchequer.⁶⁶ In Cheap Ward, however, there was considerable difference in the amount paid at the two places. It was rated at London for the collection of the fifteenth at £72 16s., while at the exchequer but £52 11s.⁶⁷ The figures also show that there was no connection between the wealth of the ward and its

⁵⁸Stow, *passim*.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 382.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 188.

⁶²*Ibid.*, *passim*.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 208.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 179.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, *passim*.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 197, 217, 255, 269, 296, 329, 337, 344.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 269.

representation in the common council. Cordwainer Street Ward, which was rated at £52, had eight common councilmen,⁶⁸ while Lime Street Ward, rated at £1 19s. 2d. 3far., had four common councilmen,⁶⁷ and Farringdon Ward Within, rated at £50, had twelve common councilmen,⁷⁰ and Cripple-gate Ward, rated at £40, had eight common councilmen,⁷¹ and Candlewick Street, with the same number of common councilmen, was rated at £16.⁷²

Of far greater importance than the division of the city into wards was the part played by the companies in the government of the city. Formed originally for the purpose of aiding and protecting their fellow-workmen in the pursuance of their occupations, the companies had assumed much control of municipal affairs. Especially was this true with regard to the "twelve great companies,"⁷³ for in order that a man might be eligible to the highest offices the city had to give—that of Lord Mayor—it was necessary for him to be a member of one of these associations.⁷⁴ Then, too, the right of sharing in the privileges of the corporation was directly dependent on membership in the guilds.

The companies had acquired much power through their accumulation of property and money, which had come to them through bequests, from rents, from entrance fees,⁷⁵ fines, and fees paid for advanced rank in the company. Above the body of members constituting the bulk of each company there was the smaller group of liverymen, while above these was the body of governors,—in some instances consisting only of the governors or wardens, in others of these men aided by persons who had previously acted as the chief officials of the company.⁷⁶ To be

⁶⁸Stow, 255.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 179.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 322.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 290.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 226.

⁷³The twelve Great Companies: Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Merchant Tailors, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners, Clothworkers.

⁷⁴Stow (1633 ed.), 199.

⁷⁵Manningham, *Diary*, 12; *Statutes of the Realm*, 22, H. VIII, 4.

⁷⁶See Cheyney, *Industrial History of England*, p. 149, for a fuller discussion of this matter.

a member of the livery a certain sum was charged by each company, while to be a warden or governor an additional sum was charged.⁷⁷

With the money so acquired the companies became the great bankers of the city. When there was need of money at short notice it was to the companies that the city turned. Thus in 1545, when, on account of the great dearth, it was necessary to import 4,000 quarters of corn from Dantsig and Bremen, the companies raised the amount of money required to purchase it among themselves, for which the chamberlain agreed to repay them a year later.⁷⁸ Again in 1553, when Mary passed through the city after her coronation, the recorder presented her with a purse containing £500 in gold. This sum had been raised among the crafts, with the understanding that it would be paid a month later by the chamberlain. In 1558, when Elizabeth was hurried into the Scotch war, the companies brought to the mayor and aldermen assembled in the Guildhall what money they could raise to aid the queen in her undertaking.⁷⁹

The companies frequently spent large sums of money in keeping the city in repair. In 1549 the expenses of cleaning out the town ditch between Aldersgate and Newgate were shared by the chamber and certain of the companies.⁸⁰ It was to the companies, too, that the privy council turned in 1597 when it was necessary to repair the parish church of Blackfriars, even though that church was in a district over which the city had no control.⁸¹ The companies took a large share in any additional work which might be assigned to the city. When London or the kingdom was in any immediate danger the companies were called upon to take part in the watch. When the Protector Somerset was in the Tower the crafts were commanded to guard the gates by day.⁸² Then, too, when it was

⁷⁷Manningham, 13.

⁷⁸Wriothlesley, II, 91.

⁷⁹Machyn, 168.

⁸⁰Wriothlesley, II, 20.

⁸¹A. P. C., 1597, 13.

⁸²*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 71.

necessary to raise troops, the mayor sent precepts to the companies to provide equipments as well as men for the levy.⁸³

In all cases of dispute in which the companies were concerned the Lord Mayor acted as arbiter, whether the contention was between members of the same company which reached proportions too great to be settled by the wardens of the company, or disputes between different companies, or between a company and some other institution.⁸⁴

By far the greatest influence which the companies possessed was the control which they exercised over the citizenship of the metropolis. In order that an English born subject might be recognized as a citizen of London it was necessary for him to be made "free" of one of the chartered companies.⁸⁵ According to a charter granted in 1319 by Edward II, his admittance to the freedom of a company was to be testified to by six honest and sufficient members of the company.⁸⁶ This charter further provided that all who had been admitted to the freedom of the city contrary to these provisions since the accession of Edward were to be deprived of their freedom.⁸⁷ That persons were admitted to the freedom of the city without previous admittance to a company in spite of the stipulations of this charter is evident from the order passed by the court of aldermen a century after the period with which we are dealing. This act of 1687 declared that the warden of the company should appear before the chamberlain and declare the claimant already admitted in the company.⁸⁸

There were, however, some exceptions to this rule. In order that an alien might be admitted to the freedom of London he was required to take three steps, two of which were the reverse of those taken by the native Englishman. In the first place, it was necessary for him to be made a "free denizen."

⁸³Grafton's *Chronicle*, II, 522; Hist. MSS. Com., Salisbury Papers, IV, 162; Remem., 231, 232; Wriothesley, I, 142; Machyn, 207.

⁸⁴A. P. C., 1575-1576, 176; *ibid.*, 1591, 11; Remem., 92, 179, 182.

⁸⁵*Laws and Customs of London*, 112.

⁸⁶Hist. Charters, 46.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 47.

⁸⁸Municipal Corporations Report, 61.

This consisted in his taking a corporal oath of loyalty to the crown in the Common Hall.⁸⁹ This body consisted of masters, wardens and liverymen of the companies of London, assembled in the Guildhall. Being thus naturalized, the person was permitted to carry on his work unmolested,⁹⁰ to meet with other members of the occupation he practiced in the hall belonging to the company,⁹¹ and to possess property within the city.⁹² For these privileges he was expected to contribute with the company that admitted him to its hall, in any demand for money which was made by the city or by the crown.⁹³ If he proved worthy of such an honor, he was then admitted to the freedom of the city by vote of the common council at the suggestion of members of the company.⁹⁴ Some few persons, too, were admitted by the chief men of London at their installation into office. When the oath of office was administered to an alderman he might enfranchise one man, each sheriff two men, and the mayor four.⁹⁵ The alien on being admitted to the freedom of the city received two more privileges. He enjoyed the right of the London citizen to be exempt from toll throughout the realm,⁹⁶ and he had the privilege of holding any of the lesser offices at the disposal of the city.⁹⁷ It was not until he had taken the final step in his enfranchisement that he was entitled to all the privileges of a London citizen. After his admittance to the city freedom, he might be made a member of one of the companies. Then it was that he might share in the election of some of the city officials. After this he might purchase his admittance to the livery, when he would be privileged to sit in Common Hall.

⁸⁹C. S. P., Foreign, 1558-1559, 574; Statutes of the Realm, 32 H. VIII, 16; A. P. C., 1577-1578, 252.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 1587-1588, 416; Remem., 256.

⁹¹Statutes of the Realm, 32 H. VIII, 16.

⁹²A. P. C., 1590, 459.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 1577-1578, 252; *ibid.*, 1587-1588, 235.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 1577-1578, 333; *ibid.*, 1597-1598, 290; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VIII, 257; Remem., 155.

⁹⁵Manningham, 12.

⁹⁶Bohun, *Privilegia Londini*, 52; *Letters, Foreign and Domestic*, Henry VIII, V, 202.

⁹⁷A. P. C., 1577-1578, 168; Remem., 276; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, V, 80.

and take part in the election of the Lord Mayor and some other officers of London.⁹⁸

The great body of citizens of London, however, became such through their membership in a company. This was effected in three ways. The person might be made free by serving as an apprentice, or by showing that he was the son of a freeman of London, or by receiving the privilege through purchase or by gift.⁹⁹

By far the greater number of freemen were admitted through service. So great was the number that acts regulating apprenticeship were passed not only by the city in the court of common council,¹⁰⁰ but also by the central government.¹⁰¹ According to these acts the earliest age at which a person might be bound was fourteen. It was further required that a child so bound should serve a freeman of London for seven years. This latter requirement was insured in the first place by the oath which every freeman was required to take at his admittance in the chamberlain's court, agreeing to take no apprentice for a shorter period than seven years.¹⁰² In addition to this, it was necessary that the indenture of each apprentice be enrolled in the chamberlain's office in the presence of the apprentice within a year. Moreover, it was required that the apprentice be again presented to the chamberlain before he could be admitted to a company. Again, in order to prevent fraud on the part of the master or servant, stringent rules were enacted by the common council. If a master allowed his servant his liberty before the expiration of his time and at the end of the seven years presented him to the chamberlain as having served, or if he hired him to a non-freeman, he should be disfranchised and his servant not admitted. The same punishment was administered if the master permitted the apprentice

⁹⁸A. P. C., 1597-1598, 290; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VIII, 257.

⁹⁹Holinshed, *Chronicle* II, 207; Manningham, 12; A. P. C., 1591-1592, 51.

¹⁰⁰Act of Common Council, 28 H. VIII. in Stow (1633 ed.), 690.

¹⁰¹Statutes of the Realm, 5 Eliz., 4.

¹⁰²Holinshed II, 207.

to buy or sell foreign goods.¹⁰³ This act regulated the daily life of an apprentice. He was forbidden to marry on the pain of losing his freedom. A woman who married lost her freedom, but was permitted to leave her employment, while a man not only forfeited his freedom but was also compelled to serve out his time.¹⁰⁴

Many persons were admitted to the freedom by birthright. A man twenty-one years of age, whose father had been a member of a company prior to the applicant's birth, was admitted free to a company "by his father's copy."¹⁰⁵ But frequently men so entitled to freedom served out apprenticeships, for, besides learning the trade, in some of the companies higher offices were open to those who had gained their freedom through apprenticeship.¹⁰⁶

Admittance by redemption consisted either in the grant by the wardens and the livery of a company to a prominent individual, or in the purchase of his freedom by an Englishman desiring to become affiliated with a company.¹⁰⁷

Besides the citizens there were a number of "strangers" living within London. These, including both aliens and Englishmen, were expected to contribute with the citizens to any subsidy that was levied for the defense of the realm. Though this brought forth much complaint from the strangers, the privy council always upheld the mayor and aldermen in their efforts to obtain money from all inhabitants of the city.¹⁰⁸ In 1596, October 6, when the Lord Mayor complained that many, especially doctors of law and gentlemen, had refused to aid in the contribution, the lords of the council declared, "We think it reasonable and requisite that all such as keep any dwelling houses in the city should be charged to contribute."¹⁰⁹ In the

¹⁰³Act of Common Council, 28 H. VIII, *loc cit.*

¹⁰⁴Manningham, 12; *Green's Tu Quoque*, Act I, Sc. I.

¹⁰⁵A. P. C., 1591-1592, 51.

¹⁰⁶Besant's *Tudor London* contains a good chapter dealing with the life of the London apprentices.

¹⁰⁷The Duke of Wurtemberg, in Rye, *England as Seen by Foreigners*, 7.

¹⁰⁸A. P. C., 1558-1570, 320; *Ibid.*, 1592-1593, 441; *Ibid.*, 1595-1596, 133.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 1596-1597, 228.

same way all dwelling within the city were charged to aid in the levying of soldiers and in equipping ships of war.¹¹⁰

The strangers also contributed to the loans, those not inconsiderable services which the city rendered to the crown. The Tudor sovereigns, looking upon London as a collateral factor of great value, did not hesitate to make use of it in times of financial embarrassment. As in the case of the subsidy, whenever money was to be used for the general defense of the realm, all residents of the city were called upon to contribute. In 1598, on account of the great expenditure of money consequent upon the disorder in Ireland, the queen asked the city for a loan of £20,000.¹¹¹ The mayor was then authorized to ascertain the wealth of the strangers and to assess them accordingly.¹¹²

Besides the money which the citizens might actually lend, there was another way in which the crown realized out of the wealth of London. The sovereign might borrow money from the foreign countries on the security of bonds issued by the city, in which it agreed to assume the payment of the debt in case the crown failed to do so.¹¹³ This seems to have been a favorite device of the early Tudors, for the acts of the privy council give proof of many instances when Sir Thomas Gresham, the agent successively for Edward, Mary and Elizabeth in the Low Countries, raised money on the strength of two bonds, one signed by the sovereign, the other by the city.¹¹⁴ Elizabeth used this means of raising the money which she lent to the Netherlands in 1577-78. Of the £160,000 which she promised the States, £20,000 were lent by the city, which was sent directly to the Netherlands.¹¹⁵ The remainder was raised by Davison from merchants in the Low Countries and in High Germany, on the queen's and the city's bonds. Some £30,000 had been obtained

¹¹⁰A. P. C., 1587-1588, 429; *ibid.*, 1595-1596, 153.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, 1598-1599, 40.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, 1598-1599, 376.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, 1556-1558, 348; *ibid.*, 1558-1560, 101.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 1552-1554, 376; *ibid.*, 1556-1558, 23.

¹¹⁵C. S. P. Foreign, 1577-1578, 707, 928.

from two Italian bankers.¹¹⁶ Somewhat later one of these, Horatio Palavicino, must have bought out the share of the other in the matter, for in 1583 we find him holding both bonds for the entire amount.¹¹⁷ At this time the principal and interest amounted to £33,374, 4s., 4d. From that time on till 1602 Palavicino repeatedly appealed to the privy council for payment of either the principal or the interest.¹¹⁸ As the States had regularly paid the annuity and by 1598 had paid their entire debt, the Italian requested that his accounts with the queen be adjusted. On December 21, 1598, Palavicino wrote to Sir Robert Cecil, declaring that Elizabeth's loss of credit was due to the fact that she failed to refund his money.¹¹⁹ He also appealed frequently to the mayor and aldermen, on account of their bonds, to urge the crown to pay the amount owing to him.¹²⁰ They in turn urged the privy council to pay Palavicino and other creditors. This non-payment of debts may have had much to do with the action of the city in 1598 and 1602, in demanding security before lending money to Elizabeth. Although in the early days of her reign they advanced money readily, at these later dates they demanded security in lands and the customs of the city for a loan of £150,000 at one time, and at another the security of carrack goods for £6,000.¹²¹

This study of the conditions of London has shown that the municipal life was regulated by a body of charters, granted by various sovereigns, and to some extent by a few statutes passed during the period under consideration. It is also apparent that the most influential bodies within the metropolis were the trading companies, for it was only through connection with them that citizenship was determined, and the election of the principal officials consummated. It is seen, too, that aliens, under certain circumstances, might be admitted to full municipal privileges,

¹¹⁶Remem., 185, 186.

¹¹⁷Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VI, 170, 241.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, VIII, 111.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 185.

¹²⁰Remem., 186, 187.

¹²¹C. S. P. Foreign, 1577-1578, 418; A. P. C., 1554-1556, 321; Remem., 187; Chamberlain's *Letters*, 31; Machyn, 168.

and that all foreigners living within the city were expected to contribute with the citizens in all levies of men or money for the general protection of the kingdom. Finally, it is seen that the city greatly aided the crown in financial matters by either advancing money directly or by giving bonds to secure the payment of money advanced elsewhere.

CHAPTER II.

QUALIFICATIONS AND ELECTION OF LORD MAYOR.

Of the officials of London the most important was the Lord Mayor. The dignity of his position gave him a certain amount of prestige not only while he was the head of the city,¹ but during his subsequent service as alderman he took precedence of the recorder, the sheriffs and other aldermen, being one of the justices of the peace of London.² The title "Lord" which appertained to the office was jealously guarded, as were also all those brilliant devices which tended to make the position conspicuous in an age dominated by a love of pageantry and show.³

There were certain requirements to be satisfied before one might be eligible to the office. The candidate must have served as alderman for a considerable length of time. When Henry sent word to the city in 1537 that he wished Sir Thomas Gresham to be elected mayor, it was with great reluctance that the commons acquiesced, because he had been alderman for one year only.⁴ In addition to holding the office of alderman the

¹*Relation of England*, 43.

²Charter Ed. III. in *Hist. Charters*, 53.

³A. P. C., 1558-1590, 266.

⁴Wriothesley, 67.

aspirant must also be a member of one of the twelve leading companies.⁵ And, though each of these companies nominally had a right equal to every other one, in the period of years covered by the Tudor rule 24 per cent of the mayors were mercers, while not quite 2 per cent were vintners.⁶

An act of common council passed in the seventeenth year of Richard II declared "that no person shall from henceforth be mayor in the said city if he have not first been sheriff of the said city, to the end that he may be tried in governance and bounty before he attains such estate of the mayoralty."⁷ This act was not strictly adhered to, for in 1520 Sir John Bruge was elected mayor, although he had not previously served as sheriff. The same thing is true with regard to Sir John Langley, mayor in 1574⁸, and Sir Cuthbert Buckle, mayor in 1593.¹⁰

There was another condition necessary for a man to hold the office of mayor, which was as imperative as those established by custom or law. It was impossible for a person to act as the chief official of London unless he were wealthy, as the expenses arising from the position were many, while for his services he received no compensation.¹¹ Besides the great feast which he was compelled to give on the day he was sworn into office, the mayor was supposed to give additional banquets at various seasons of the year. Moreover, he was expected to entertain any foreigners of rank, or any official of the English crown who happened to visit London. These smaller feasts were held at the Guildhall, at the hall of the mayor's company or in the mayor's house.¹² During the time of his service he was obliged to live "so magnificently that foreigner or native, without any expense, was free if he could find a chair empty to dine at his table, where there was always a great plenty."¹³

⁵Stow (ed. 1633), 573-593.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Liber Albus*, 399.

⁸Grafton's *Chronicle*.

⁹Stow's *Annals*, 320.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 309.

¹¹Remem., 365.

¹²Wriothesley, II, 25.

¹³Paul Hentzner, *Travels in England* in Rye, 107.

A supply of ready money was further required by the splendor which the mayor was compelled to maintain. Some of the display attendant upon the office and its following was, however, not chargeable to the mayor—the scepter, sword and cap which were carried before him on ceremonial occasions belonged to the corporation. The chain of gold, too, which each mayor wore on special occasions, was owned by the city, and was presented to each incumbent as he was installed into office. It had been given to the city by Sir John Allen, mayor, with the stipulation that each succeeding mayor should wear it on state occasions.¹⁴ It seems to have attracted the attention of the foreigners, who confused it with the collar worn by the Knights of the Garter.¹⁵ Even though these articles were supplied by the city, the garments which the Lord Mayor had to provide for himself and his suite must have drawn a large amount of money from his purse. Of the thirty-one members of the official household of the mayor, nine were supplied with livery by him, the others being provided for by the city.¹⁶ In case there was a death in his family, the mayor supplied mourning garments for the household. It was necessary for him to provide himself with gowns and cloaks of three colors; on certain days he wore a black gown and cloak, on other days a violet and on still other days a scarlet cloak and gown.¹⁷

It was not within the city only that the position of the mayor was regarded with respect. Whenever the officials of the crown wrote to the mayor, they addressed him as “Lord.”¹⁸ At the coronations, too, the Lord Mayor had special duties to perform. At Henry VIII’s coronation the mayor, who had been dubbed knight by the king prior to his sitting down to dinner, rose from his place and served the king with hyppoeras from a golden cup. As a reward for the services, Henry presented him with the cup and its cover of gold.¹⁹ A similar ceremony was

¹⁴Wriothesley, I. 161.

¹⁵Paul Hentzner, *I. c.*, 107.

¹⁶Stow (ed. 1633), 441.

¹⁷Paul Hentzner, *I. c.*, 107; Wriothesley, I. 106.

¹⁸C. S. P., A. P. C., and Remem. *passim*.

¹⁹Hall’s *Chronicle*, 510.

performed at the coronation of Anne Boleyn, when the mayor, attended by twelve citizens, served the queen from a cup of assay and from a cup of gold.²⁰ Both of these cups were given to him as a reward for his service. The respect felt by the crown for the city's officials is also apparent in the gifts of bucks and does which were made to the mayor, in addition to the annual grants of venison given to the city. Mary issued several warrants to deliver game to the mayor from Nonesuch.²¹ The knighting of the mayor, too, at his presentations testifies to the esteem in which the position was held by the crown.

The election of the mayor was held annually in the Guildhall. Prior to 1546 the elections took place on St. Edward's Day (October 13), but on account of the expenses of the feasts, an act of common council of that year changed the date to Michaelmas, on which day the sheriffs took their oaths.²² This alteration in the election day necessitated but one feast, as the banquet provided by the sheriffs for the aldermen sufficed for the mayor's election banquet.²³ Before this time each mayor had been compelled to give a feast in October, consequently this change saved him about £40.²⁴

The year 1546 witnessed two other important acts of the common council relative to the election of the city's executive. These provided that any person who, on being elected to the office, refused to serve should pay a fine of £1,000, but that previous service should form an exemption.²⁵ Later it was provided that no person should be eligible to office for a second time.

The mode of proceeding with an election was well regulated by custom. At eight o'clock in the morning, all the aldermen met the Lord Mayor and sheriffs in the Guildhall, wearing their scarlet gowns.²⁶ Going to the chapel, they heard a sermon,

²⁰Hall, 805.

²¹Letter from Lord Mayor to Burghley, in Ellis *Letters*, Second Series, III, 51; Hist. MSS. Com. VII Report, Appendix I, 612.

²²*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 52.

²³Wriothesley, I, 175.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 171.

²⁵Acts of Common Council, in *Municipal Corporation Reports*, 29.

²⁶Stow (ed. 1633), 652.

which was followed by the communion service. After the service was completed they proceeded to the court of Hustings, where the commons were assembled. This assembly seems to have been composed of the common councilmen and the livery of the principal companies.²⁷ After all were seated the recorder arose and addressed the meeting, repeating what had been said to the smaller assembly by the preacher, and calling attention to their duty of choosing wisely.²⁸ When the recorder had finished his speech, he, the Lord Mayor and the aldermen returned to the council chamber, leaving the two new sheriffs with the common sergeant to speak to the commons. The sergeant then addressed the people, during which time one sheriff stood on each side of him, with the town clerk beside one and the chamberlain beside the other, regarding their duty of choosing wisely.²⁹ After three or four aldermen had been nominated by the commons, and the vote had been taken by show of hands, the two aldermen receiving the greatest number of votes were announced as the choice of the commons by the common sergeant, who acted as the election officer.³⁰ During this time the commons were required to refrain from speaking. These names were then sent to the Lord Mayor and aldermen in the council chamber by the common sergeant, where the next step in the election took place. The recorder, standing by the window, took a poll of the aldermen, beginning with the youngest, each alderman in turn giving his vote. They then returned to the Hustings Court, with the man elected on the left of the recorder,³¹ who again addressed the commons, asking if they approved of the choice. After they had signified their approval the swordbearer took the tippet from the neck of the newly chosen mayor and in its stead placed the chain of gold.³² This done, the mayor advanced to the place of the recorder and "disabled himself"

²⁷Stow (ed. 1633), 632; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 117.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹Stow (Ed. 1633), 652.

³⁰Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 117.

³¹Stow (ed. 1633), 652.

³²*Ibid.*

according to the custom, saying that he was unworthy to fill so high an office, then gave thanks for the choice. After another speech from the old Lord Mayor, the two mayors, putting off their cloaks, rode together to the oldest sheriff's house to dinner, followed by many of the aldermen.³³

At these elections, in addition to the common councilmen and livery, some of the citizens and foreigners of rank were permitted to be present as spectators.³⁴

Notwithstanding all the ceremony which accompanied the election, it seems in some instances that the procedure was little more than mere formality, with the result known long beforehand. It cannot be that a mere spirit of prophesying caused Henry Machyn, in commenting on the deaths of various aldermen, to say that if each had lived he would have become mayor the year following.³⁵ The fact that the course of the election was known beforehand is also brought out in the election of 1537, when Henry desired that Thomas Gresham be made mayor.³⁶ The chronicler remarks that the commons would have had Mr. Holes, who by the king's letter was put off three years.³⁷

In rare instances there was some confusion at the elections. In 1526 the commons refused to elect Thomas Seymer, because he had been sheriff in 1516 and with the other officials of the

³³Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 117; Nichols, *Progresses of Elizabeth*, III, 259.

³⁴Samuel Kiechel, Merchant of Swabia, in Rye, 88.

³⁵Machyn, 116, 170, 213.

³⁶Wriothesley, I, 67.

³⁷That the senior sheriff was not always chosen as mayor is shown by the following tables:

Sheriffs.

1571 Henry Miles	John Branch
1572 Richard Pipe	Nicholas Woodruff
1573 James Harvey	Thomas Pullison
1574 Thomas Blanke	
1575 Edward Osborne	

Mayors.

1578 Sir Rich. Pipe	1582 Sir Thos. Blanke
1579 Sir Nich. Woodruff	1583 Sir Ed. Osborne
1580 Sir John Branch	1584 Sir. Thos. Pullison
1581 Sir James Harvey	

city aided Wolsey to suppress the riots of "Evil May Day." Eventually, however, he was chosen.³⁸ There was some little commotion, too, when Mr. George Monop refused to accept the office after his election. No one was elected in his place until October 28, when Mr. Thomas Baldey agreed to accept it.³⁹

Any intrusion of the crown into the rights and privileges of the city regarding the election was bitterly resented by the commons. While Elizabeth interfered but once in the city's election, Henry VIII seems frequently to have desired to regulate the choice of mayor. In 1535, when the crown feared some papal and French intrigue, Cromwell, the Lord Chancellor, was sent to the city several days before the election took place to see that the commons should choose some one of authority, influence and experience to fill the position. On the eve of St. Edward's day, at the time of the election, the king sent a letter to the recorder declaring that it was his pleasure that Sir John Allen be elected mayor.⁴⁰ Though the commons agreed, it was said that Sir John himself, not wishing the office, had spent upwards of 100m. to prevent the election.⁴¹ Although the commons yielded in this instance, two years later they were not so willing to grant his majesty's requests.⁴² Four years after that the royal interference is again apparent, but the suit is milder. On September 16 the lords of the privy council asked the lords of the council who were living in London to ascertain whether the report that had reached the king's ears, that the Lord Mayor and citizens of London had determined to elect a certain Mr. Denman as mayor for the ensuing year, were correct.⁴³ If they found it to be true, they were then to send for the mayor, recorder and such other aldermen as they should think fit, and should require them to use all the means they could to bring about the election of some other person for the office.⁴⁴ If they had intended to

³⁸*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 33.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 31.

⁴⁰C. S. P. Spanish, 1534-1535, 552: L. F. & D., II VIII, 9, 594.

⁴¹Wriothesley, I, 31.

⁴²L. F. & D., II VIII, 12, Pt. II, 576; Wriothesley, I, 67.

⁴³A. P. C., VII, 243.

⁴⁴L. F. & D., II VIII, 16, 1184.

choose Mr. Denman, the city officials must have yielded again, for Michael Dormar was mayor for that year.⁴⁵ It was in 1574 that Elizabeth undertook to alter an election. On October 15, before the Lord Mayor had taken his oath of office, the privy council appointed five men to examine into the objections against Mr. Hayes, lately elected to be Lord Mayor of London.⁴⁶ At whatever results the investigators arrived, Alderman Howes became mayor.⁴⁷ On account of the plague he did not hold the annual banquet in Guildhall; instead he gave a feast to the aldermen only at his house, while the companies dined at their respective halls.⁴⁸

The banquet which each of the mayors gave one month after his election was held on St. Simon and Jude's day, after the mayor had been sworn into office at the Guildhall, and had been presented to the king or his representative at the exchequer, and had been conducted back in triumph to the Guildhall. The administration of the oath was conducted with great ceremony, in honor of the old mayor as well as of the new. The ceremony of the meeting at Caesar's house, which the conspirators planned as a decoy in Shakespeare's great play, must have called up in the minds of the Elizabethans the picture of the honor paid to the departing mayor. All the aldermen who were to dine with the new mayor met at the house of the retiring official at eight in the morning, wearing their fur-trimmed violet gowns and cloaks. There they awaited the sheriffs, who conducted them to the Guildhall, where they received the new mayor, escorted by his company. Then they passed into the court of Hustings, where the assembled freemen witnessed the taking of the oath. Foreigners of rank were sometimes through courtesy admitted.⁴⁹ Silence being commanded by the common crier, the town clerk administered the oath. The old Lord Mayor then arose from his place and took the seat that had been occupied by the mayor.

⁴⁵Grafton, *Chronicle* (list of mayors).

⁴⁶A. P. C., 1571-1575, 300.

⁴⁷Stow, *Abridgement of Chronicles*, 315.

⁴⁸A. P. C., 1571-1575, 303.

⁴⁹Samuel Kiechel, *l. c.*, 88.

Then, after many courtesies, the chamberlain delivered the scepter, the keys of the common seal and the seal of mayoralty to the mayor. The swordbearer then presented the sword, likewise after much ceremonial bowing. After this the new Lord Mayor was conducted by the retiring officer to his own home, where he gave a small dinner to a few of the aldermen.⁵⁰

The day following was the Lord Mayor's great day. Then occurred the elaborate trip to Westminster with the presentation, followed by the return trip with its pageant, culminating in the banquet at the Guildhall.⁵¹ Early in the morning the sheriffs and aldermen met at the Lord Mayor's house, wearing their scarlet gowns and cloaks furred, accompanied by the livery and bachelors of the Lord Mayor's company.⁵² The bachelors were those members of the Lord Mayor's company below the rank of livery who were chosen by the mayor to act as his serving gentlemen on all feast days during the year. There were from sixty to one hundred bachelors, according to the size of the company, from which the Lord Mayor was chosen.⁵³ In procession they went to the Thames, where they took barges for Westminster. The mayor's barge, decorated with the arms of the city, was accompanied by a boat of the sovereign rigged up like a ship of war. The livery of each company had their barge decorated with the arms of the company.⁵⁴ The mayor's bachelors were the only citizens below the rank of livery who were permitted to accompany the mayor. They had a barge of their own, which preceded that of the livery of the mayor's company. This was immediately in front of the mayor's barge, in which were the aldermen, sheriffs and recorder. Landing at Westminster, they were conducted to the exchequer,⁵⁵ where the oath was given to the Lord Mayor, after which he was presented to the sovereign by the recorder. The mayor was then dubbed

⁵⁰Stow (ed. 1633), 656.

⁵¹Machyn, 224.

⁵²Stow (ed. 1633), 656.

⁵³Wm. Smith in Drake, *Shakespeare and his Time*, 103.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 162.

⁵⁵Machyn, 47, 72, 117.

knight by the Lord Chamberlain, acting as the sovereign's representative. Before returning to the city some time was spent in and about the cathedral.⁵⁶

The trip from Westminster back to the city was taken in opposite order from the way in which they went to the exchequer, the lesser crafts leading the way. At Paul's wharf the procession landed and proceeded to Paul's churchyard, where the children and men who were to take part in the march through the city were awaiting the mayor and his escort.⁵⁷ Those who took part in the pageant proper were dressed in various kinds of suits prepared for the occasion. Some were arrayed in bright-hued gowns of uniform color and cut, others were arranged in groups to represent some allegorical device, and still others impersonated the figures prominent in the old morality plays. The figures most frequently used were the wild men, the devils, the dragons and St. Paul. These pageants had been carefully executed, all tending to glorify the city and the new mayor. Many of the well known poets and dramatists of the period had planned elaborate devices for these shows. Such names as Peele, Munday, Dekker and Jonson are associated with these city pageants.⁵⁸

A new procession was then formed, consisting of the mayor and aldermen on their horses, that had been brought to the churchyard, the livery of the various crafts and the bachelors of the mayor's company and preceded by the pageants, in front of which were borne two great standards, one bearing the arms of the city, the other the arms of the mayor's company.⁵⁹ After each person had taken his proper place the great procession through Cheapside to Guildhall began.

At this hall was held the mayor's feast, to which were invited all persons of rank in the city, the wardens with the

⁵⁶Stow (1633 ed.), 656; Ellis's *Letters*, II, 1, 173; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 117; Grafton, *Chronicle*, II, 301; Nichols, II, 399.

⁵⁷Machyn, 72, 155, 270.

⁵⁸*Lord Mayor's Pageants*, Percy Society, Vol. X.

⁵⁹*Green's Tu Quoque*.

prominent members of the livery of each company, and the lords of the privy council and ambassadors of all the foreign countries.⁶⁰ In order to provide food for the guests, as their numbers reached far up into the hundreds,⁶¹ the sovereign sometimes sent game from the royal parks to the Lord Mayor.⁶²

The guests were placed at different tables in various parts of the great hall, the women and persons of highest rank sitting with the mayor and aldermen at the upper tables. The feast lasted many hours, during which time several courses were served.⁶³ While it was necessary to cut down the number of courses when the Lord Mayor's day came on Friday, the feast was almost as elaborate as in other years.⁶⁴

During plague years, when it seemed unwise to hold the accustomed festivities, permission was granted to the Lord Mayor and aldermen to postpone the feast,⁶⁵ or to abolish it for the year, provided the money which would have been expended for that purpose would be used for the relief of the suffering.⁶⁶ Though it had been customary, when contagion was feared, to appeal to the privy council for permission to omit the feast, the city regarded the giving of the banquet as its prerogative, and refused to permit outside interference. In 1580 the Lord Mayor's day came on a Friday, and as the mayor, Sir John Branch, was in such poor health that he could not eat fish, the

⁶⁰Stow, 443; *Relation of England*, 44; C. S. P., Foreign, 1564-1565, 251; L. F. & D., II. VIII, 9, 732.

⁶¹Besides officers of the city, there were present representatives from each of the sixty companies. In all cases these included the wardens and some of the principal members of the livery. The number of liverymen coming from different companies varied from one to seventeen. From the twelve great companies there were usually eight members, while the most frequent number from the lesser companies was two. In addition to these, the mayor was permitted to invite anyone he wished. Usually he asked the ambassadors from all the foreign countries and foreigners of note, members of the privy council, and members of the nobility and the wives of the city officers. Wriothlesley, I, 16, 176; L. F. & D., II. VIII, 16, 1540.

⁶²Stow, 443; L. F. & D., II. VIII, 12, 940.

⁶³*Relation of England*, 44; Wriothlesley, II, 208.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 176.

⁶⁵Remem., 207.

⁶⁶A. P. C., 1571-1575, 303.

city officials decided to omit the feast.⁶⁷ The following day the members of the privy council wrote to the Lord Mayor, stating that the queen considered the city's action in not holding the feast as so very singular that she desired to know the cause.⁶⁸ In order that the explanation might be accurate, Elizabeth demanded that some person qualified to answer should be sent immediately to the members of the council. Sir John Branch at once responded by writing to the council that his feeble health was the cause of the omission. He added that it was his intention to invite them all at some more convenient day.⁶⁹ The day following he wrote to Lord Burghley requesting him to explain to Elizabeth the reason for postponing the feast.⁷⁰

When the banquet was concluded the procession formed again and marched to St. Paul's, where divine service was held, after which the mayor was escorted to his home.⁷¹

In case of the death of the mayor during the term of his service, a new officer was immediately elected in the court of Hustings according to the prescribed form.⁷² The procession to Westminster, or, in case of the king's absence, to the Tower, was held as well as the banquet to the Guildhall.⁷³ The act of common council declaring that a man might not be elected twice as mayor, does not seem to have been applied in such places. In 1544, April 17, Sir Ralph Warren was elected to complete the term of Sir William Bowyer, although he had served as mayor in 1536. And again in 1588, Richard Martin, who was elected at the death of Sir Martin Colthrop, was again elected in 1593 to serve out the year of Sir Cuthbert Buckle. Sir Rowland Hayward in 1590 completed the term of Sir John Allad, although twenty years before he had been Lord Mayor.⁷⁴

⁶⁷Remem., 206.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 205.

⁶⁹A. P. C., 1580-1581, 245.

⁷⁰Remem., 206.

⁷¹Machyn, 155.

⁷²Wriothesley, I, 146.

⁷³Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Mrs. Falkland-Russell-Astley's Papers, 5.

⁷⁴Stow's *Annals*; Grafton's *Chronicle*.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAYOR AS A ROYAL OFFICIAL.

The most important part of the mayor's duties was performed only with the advice and consent of the aldermen.¹ Consequently to a certain extent were checked those evils which must necessarily have arisen from the frequent change in the principal office. Especially in his judicial capacity, was the mayor expected to act only with advice. As justice of the peace he acted with the aldermen who had "passed the chair," that is with those aldermen who had served as mayor, as judge of oyer and terminer with the recorder and national justices. In his own court he heard pleas when assisted by the recorder and a few of the aldermen. In other cases, however, he fulfilled his duties unaided. With regard to those functions which ordinarily appertained to the crown officials, the mayor acted singly. These were privileges that had been granted from time to time by different sovereigns. Among them were his duties as clerk of the market, escheator, lord lieutenant, coroner and collector of the subsidy.

As clerk of the market, the mayor regulated the prices of food and the assize of bread and beer, and inspected the weights and measures used in the city. When the prices of wheat rose or fell, the mayor ordered a corresponding change in the size of the loaf of bread. Thus in 1553, when the price of wheat began to fall, the penny loaf of wheaten bread was increased from 20 to 34 ounces.² In 1579 the lords of the council commended the Lord Mayor for his zeal in lowering the price of bread³ and increasing its size when wheat had become cheaper.⁴ If a baker were found guilty of making bread contrary to the mayor's instructions he was imprisoned. Burghley wrote to the Lord

¹Norton in Collier's Reprints, III. 10.

²Wriothesley, I. 81.

³Remem., 32.

⁴A. P. C., 1578-1588, 269.

Mayor in 1581, asking him to release a certain man who had been imprisoned on account of making undersized loaves, as the bread had been made not for the purpose of sale, but for Lord Dudley's household.⁵ In 1592 the mayor wrote to the Lord Treasurer that the bakers of the city complained that, in altering the size of the loaf according to the fall in the price of corn, he had made the size of the loaf of the city bakers exceed that of the bakers outside the city's limits.⁶ It was evidently the mayor's intention to bring pressure to bear upon the bakers outside of the city, so that the loaves might be equal in weight. A few years later, when the size of the loaf had been very small on account of the scarcity of grain, the mayor neglected to cause the size to be increased after a particularly good harvest. The privy council accordingly wrote to him that unless the abuse were instantly remedied, great blame would be ascribed by the queen to him.⁷

When the harvest had been particularly poor, the mayor gave directions for the importation of wheat and rye in order that prices might be kept within bounds.⁸ In 1523, because a poor harvest was feared, the Lord Mayor made provision for the importation of fifteen quarters of wheat. But when it arrived the bakers, who wished to sell their own, refused to use it, declaring that it was musty. When Wolsey heard of this, he ordered the bakers to prove their assertion. As they were unable to do this, he commanded that they buy the wheat that the mayor had ordered.⁹ In 1546, and again in 1549, the mayor made bargains with certain merchants of the Steelyard for the importation of wheat from Bremen and Dantsig.¹⁰ With the same object in view, no great quantity of wheat might be exported without special license from the mayor, who in case of particularly large shipments received permission from the

⁵Remem., 33.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷A. P. C., 1598-1599, 142.

⁸C. S. P., 1547-1580, 268; L. F. & D., II, VIII, 9, 614.

⁹Hall's *Chronicle*, 650; A. P. C., 1542-1547, 362.

¹⁰Wriothesley, II, 30.

Lord Chancellor.¹¹ The people were usually opposed to having great quantities of grain exported, alleging that it always caused a rise in prices. Hence they frequently urged the mayor to limit the number of licenses.¹² In 1597 Sir Robert Cecil asked the mayor to give license for 200 quarters of wheat to be shipped to the western part of England. The mayor replied that he would be glad to satisfy his request, but he feared the people might object.¹³

The prices of beer and ale fluctuated at about the same time and according to the same scale as that of the bread, being dependent upon the harvests. In 1579, when the mayor was praised for increasing the size of the loaf of bread, he was urged to call before him the wardens and the officers of the beer brewers, in order to ascertain from them what alterations in prices they had made.¹⁴ The retail price of wines, too, was regulated by a conference held between the mayor and the chief merchants.¹⁵

During the Lenten season it was the custom for the mayor to issue licenses to certain butchers, giving them permission to sell meat during the weeks of fasting. Not only was the number of licenses limited, but each person receiving one was required to give bond that he would sell no meat except to those who were sick or otherwise unfitted for the fast, and to those ambassadors who ate meat during Lent.¹⁶

At the time of the troubles in Ireland, when the queen's navy was being equipped for the expedition there was a surplus of salt meat. The mayor was commanded to give orders that no butchers should sell any salt meat to merchants supplying their ships until this surplus be first expended.¹⁷

As the people blamed the Lord Mayor for the high prices of meat at the Easter season of 1551, he attempted to remedy the matter, but was unsuccessful, for the cattle were sold at

¹¹C. S. P., 1547-1580, 622, 637.

¹²*Ibid.*, 1581-1590, 909.

¹³Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VII, 148.

¹⁴A. P. C., 1578-1580, 269.

¹⁵C. S. P., 1547-1580, 525, 532.

¹⁶A. P. C., 1552-1554, 222; *ibid.*, 1558-1570, 205.

¹⁷C. S. P., 1595-1597, 247.

such high prices that the butchers were unable to sell at a lower figure. On account of these high rates, a royal proclamation was issued demanding that meat be sold at a lower price.¹⁸ To secure its enforcement, it was further commanded that the cattle merchants sell their wares at reasonable rates.¹⁹

In the late winter and early spring of 1553 the mayor took full control of the herring trade. All merchants of the city were forbidden to take any fish from the landing at Rye until the city had first been supplied.²⁰ When some French merchants wished to purchase thirty lasts of herring, they applied to the council, who in turn wrote to the mayor, giving order that the goods be delivered.²¹ In the same way a certain fish merchant asked the lords of the council to use their influence in causing the mayor to grant him permission to export some lasts of herring that he had bought in Zealand and wished to take to France to exchange for wines.²²

In 1541, when determining the price of sugar, the mayor was limited by order from the council. In order to ascertain the highest price at which sugar might be sold, he was required to send for five or six experienced merchants to inquire of them the prices of sugar and spices in Luxembourg and Antwerp. He was then to report this to the privy council, so that the London prices corresponded with those abroad.²³ A few days later the mayor was commanded to make proclamation that no merchant should sell the best sugar above 8d. a pound and the poorer sort at a correspondingly lower figure.²⁴

The mayor was responsible to the crown for the behavior of the city, regarding the royal edicts determining the valuation of coins. Following Edward's proclamation of 1551, by which the value of the coins was diminished, there was much discon-

¹⁸Wriothesley, II, 47.

¹⁹L. F. & D., II, VIII, 6, 341.

²⁰A. P. C., 1552-1554, 206.

²¹*Ibid.*, 229.

²²*Ibid.*, 232, 235.

²³A. P. C., VII, 104; L. F. & D., II, VIII, 16, 420.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 447; A. P. C., VII, 113.

tent in the city. The council consequently sent for the Lord Mayor to appear before the court at Greenwich. There, as a representative of the people, he was severely reprimanded for the disobedience of the city in murmuring against the proclamation, and was commanded to see that no merchant raised the prices of his wares according to the depreciation of the coins. To assist him in this undertaking, the mayor called the wardens of the various crafts and trades to meet him and the common council in the Guildhall. There it was determined that the members of the companies be warned to report to the mayor any infringement of the proclamation. Besides this, each alderman was ordered to repair to his own ward to see that abuses were corrected.²⁵ A few months later a letter of admonition was sent by the privy council to the Lord Mayor on account of his slackness in punishing the offenders.²⁶ In 1556 the mayor was directed to send spies into all the wards to arrest every person refusing to accept the established currency for his wares.²⁷ When Elizabeth was endeavoring to reform the currency, the mayor was commanded to affix the mark of the greyhound and portcullis to certain coins in order to distinguish the poorer from the better ones.²⁸

The mayor had also charge of the prices of wood and coal within the city. In 1543 he was directed to see that fuel was sold for a more reasonable price.²⁹ Owing to the scarcity of wood and coal the prices were excessively high in 1553. The mayor, therefore, caused sea coals to be sold at the markets at Billingsgate and Queenhithe for 4d. a bushel. This relieved the suffering of the poor, for which the mayor was greatly praised.³⁰

The office of escheator, which had been granted to the mayor by Edward III for London, and by Edward VI for Southwark, must have brought the mayor into close connection

²⁵Wriothesley, II, 48.

²⁶A. P. C., 1550-1552, 272, 352.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 1554-1556, 358.

²⁸C. S. P., 1547-1580, 160.

²⁹A. P. C., I, 76.

³⁰Wriothesley, 105.

with the people.³¹ Acting in this capacity, the mayor was required to look after the lands which came into the king's hands through forfeiture or other cause. To vouch for his service the mayor was required to take an oath at the exchequer, at the close of his term of service, at the same time the new mayor was taking³² his oath, that he had lawfully served the king in this position. At the death of an abbot in the early years of the period under consideration, the temporalities belonging to an abbey were seized by the escheators. In 1519, 1525 and 1528, on the election of new abbots to Reading Abbey, St. Saviour's, Bermondsey and Lincoln, respectively, the mayor received a writ, with the other escheators of the realm, to restore the lands to the abbots.³³ In 1532 certain tenements in the parish of West Chepe came into the king's hand through an inquisition held before the Lord Mayor as escheator, proving that the company of goldsmiths had acquired possession of the lands without a license.³⁴ When acting as escheator it was the mayor's duty to determine the nearest heir of the deceased,³⁵ for which service he received some fees from the estate as recompense. In 1528, for finding offices for Sir William Compton's heir, the Lord Mayor received 40 shillings.³⁶ As escheator of Southwark, the mayor had power to direct writs and precepts to the sheriffs of Surrey.³⁷

As lord lieutenant of the city of London, the mayor received a commission for the mustering and training of troops at times when the realm was in need of armed forces. His commission was usually sent at the same time as those of the lords lieutenants of the counties. In this capacity it was his duty to ascertain the number of able-bodied men and the quantity of arms that the city could furnish, to oversee the training of the men, to

³¹Hist. Charters, 55, 122.

³²*Liber Albus*, 23.

³³L. F. & D., II. VIII, 3, 123; *ibid.*, 4, 1680; *ibid.*, 4, 4143.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 5, 1499 (25).

³⁵C. S. P., *Addenda*, 1566-1579, 477.

³⁶L. F. & D., II. VIII, 4, 5017.

³⁷Camden, *Britannia*, 394.

inspect the uniforms provided by the city, and in case of insubordination to see that the culprits were properly punished.³⁸

The number of men furnished by the city varied according to the undertaking for which they were levied. In 1539 the commission sent to the Lord Mayor directed him to certify the names of all men living within the city between the ages of 16 and 60.³⁹ In order to hasten the inquiry the aldermen and mayor repaired to their respective wards and, with the aid of the constables, took the accounts.⁴⁰ Under ordinary circumstances the city was required to furnish about 500 or 600 men.⁴¹ In 1601, however, on account of the Irish war and the fear of invasion, the city was asked to raise 1,000 men.⁴² Two years previous to that, when the danger had seemed more imminent, the mayor had levied 3,000 soldiers.⁴³ This same number had also been raised in the early part of the century, when Henry's continental troubles had demanded an unusually large army. In 1545 there were two levies made in the city, one of 2,000 men⁴⁴ and the other of 1,000.⁴⁵ The year of the Armada naturally saw the greatest muster of forces. To meet the demands the city was asked to contribute 10,000 men. Of these 6,000 men were to be enrolled under certain captains and ensigns to be especially trained.⁴⁶

The levying of the men for the wars was, except in rare cases, facilitated by the co-operation of the companies. The Lord Mayor summoned the wardens, who apportioned the number to be raised among themselves. The men were then mustered before the mayor and aldermen.⁴⁷

In addition to levying the men, the Lord Mayor had to oversee the arming, the providing with uniforms, and the train-

³⁸Hall, *Chronicle*, 829.

³⁹L. F. & D., II. VIII. 14, I. 946.

⁴⁰Hall, *Chronicle*, 829; L. F. & D., II. VIII. 14, I. 940.

⁴¹A. P. C., 1558-1570, 120; C. S. P., 1547-1580, 224.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 1601-1603, 61.

⁴³Hist. MSS. Com., XV Rept., Appendix V. 71.

⁴⁴A. P. C., I. 214.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 218.

⁴⁶Hist. MSS. Com., XV Report, Appendix V. 32.

⁴⁷Machyn, 162, 164.

ing of the soldiers. In 1538, in order to keep the city well supplied with arms, the Lord Mayor devised a scheme which he hoped would be incorporated into an act by the common council. According to it every alderman was to have in his possession twenty sets of harness, the sheriffs ten, the wardens of the companies four, the liverymen two, and householders one set. To see that this was followed, the wardens of the companies were to hold yearly inspections for the purpose of viewing the armor.⁴⁸ Evidently his plan did not materialize, for in 1548 word was sent to the mayor to find men provided with armor and horses, some with six axes, some with four and some three, according to their assessment rates.⁴⁹ Again in 1579 the mayor was commanded to provide armor for the men who had been levied. The armorers hearing that their wares were likely to be sold in large quantities, began to increase their prices. To remedy this the privy council instructed the mayor to send for the armorers to induce them to return to the reasonable prices they had been accustomed to ask.⁵⁰

The city's part in providing for the defense of the realm extended to preparing ships of war with men, armor and food. It is only in the last decade of the century, however, that we find any reference to this. In 1591, 1596 and 1599 the Londoners furnished ships of war.⁵¹ In 1591 they prepared six, in 1596 ten, and in 1599 twelve ships. In the last case food was furnished by the city for the crew for two months.⁵²

When the mayor was directed to provide the soldiers with uniforms, it was usually specified what kind of suits the men were to be given. In January, 1558, the mayor was directed to prepare 500 men, ready in harness, with white coats welted, with green and red crosses.⁵³ In 1562, though the style of the garments was prescribed, the mayor was free to choose the

⁴⁸L. F. & D., II, VIII, 13, II, 72.

⁴⁹Wriothesley, I, 3.

⁵⁰Hist. MSS. Com., XV Report, Appendix V, 89.

⁵¹C. S. P., 1591-1594, 55, 57; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VI, 6.

⁵²C. S. P., 1598-1601, 312.

⁵³Machyn, 162.

color, provided all the suits were to be alike.⁵⁴ Sometimes money spent by the city in this regard was refunded by the council, after the mayor had sent an account of this coat and conduct money.⁵⁵

The time intervening between the levying of the men and their actual service or embarkment for service was spent in the practice of the arts of war. In 1578 the mayor was directed to have 2,000 men trained, so that they should be in readiness at short notice.⁵⁶ In 1580 the same number was being trained, when the plague stopped short the work. With the cessation of the sickness the mayor was commanded to renew the work of training the soldiers in the use of their weapons.⁵⁷ That the work might be better arranged, the mayor and aldermen were asked to confer with Sir Francis Knolles and Sir John Norris.⁵⁸ Late in 1588 articles were drawn up by certain experienced commanders for the purpose of training a number of citizens in the military art. These were submitted by the privy council to the Lord Mayor for consideration.⁵⁹

Not only did the city furnish men for the wars, but it also provided quarterage for many of the companies from the north and central part of England that passed through London prior to their embarkation. In 1574 the mayor was directed to find provisions and lodgings for 300 soldiers who had lately come out of Holland, and were resting in England, before being sent to Ireland.⁶⁰ Again in 1592 Burghley sent word to the mayor to provide for 300 soldiers coming from certain counties to London.⁶¹ A short time after the order was rescinded on account of the plague which was then attacking London. Because of the dread of infection, the soldiers were not shipped

⁵⁴A. P. C., 1558-1560, 122.

⁵⁵C. S. P., 1591-1594, 26.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 1547-1580, 586.

⁵⁷Remem., 230.

⁵⁸Hist. MSS. Com., Report XV, Appendix V, 33.

⁵⁹C. S. P., 1581-1590, 565.

⁶⁰A. P. C., 1571-1575, 177.

⁶¹C. S. P., 1591-1594, 211.

from London, but marched by land to avoid going near the city.⁶²

When the men levied by the city became unruly during their service they were punished after their return by the mayor. In 1587 the privy council directed the mayor to punish those soldiers that, levied for service in the Low Countries, had mutinied against Captain Simpson. The lords specified that the punishment should be severe and extraordinary, that after the men had been tied to carts and flogged through Chepeside to Tower Hill, they should be placed in a pillory and their ears cut.⁶³

The mayor's duties as lord lieutenant were most apparent when Wyatt had entered Southwark and the fear that the rebellion would spread was rife in the city. The mayor gave orders that the drawbridge be cut and thrown in the Thames, for fear some of the citizens might join the traitor.⁶⁴ He gave further orders that the aldermen and sheriffs should wear their armor, and that the shop windows be closed, and that citizens stand within doors, armed, ready to take part if there should be any need.⁶⁵

In addition to executing the functions of escheator and lord lieutenant, the mayor of London performed the duties of another county official in his capacity of coroner.⁶⁶ Technically it was the Lord Mayor who fulfilled the duties of this position, but on account of the exigencies of the municipal affairs the office was delegated to some appointee of the mayor and aldermen. The coroner's court might, however, be called before either the mayor or this deputy.⁶⁷ In 1515 Mr. Barnewell, who had been appointed coroner of London, held an inquest with twelve jurymen over the body of Richard Hun's son.⁶⁸ It was the mayor, however, who in 1537 took charge of the case of

⁶²C. S. P., 1591-1594, 266.

⁶³C. S. P., 1581-1590, 415.

⁶⁴Grafton's *Chronicle*, II, 541.

⁶⁵*Chronicle of Queen Jane and Queen Mary*, 40-43.

⁶⁶Charter, 4 Ed. IV, in *Hist. Charters*, 92.

⁶⁷Coke, *Fourth Institute*, 250.

⁶⁸Hall, *Chronicle*, 573.

Robert Packenton, mercer, whose murdered body had been found by the great conduit in Chepe.⁶⁹

A question regarding the authority of the city's coroner was raised in 1597, when that official was about to take view of a body slain in East Smithfield. The Lord Treasurer had written to the mayor to forbear to proceed in the matter, and had directed the recorder and some members of the common council to ascertain the jurisdiction of the city in that place. He asked that this "stay" might not be used as a precedent to the injury of the city.⁷⁰ A few months later the privy council wrote to the coroner directing him to make known to the recorder and Justice Southcote the time he intended holding inquiry over the body of one Bullinger, that they might assist him and advise him in the matter.⁷¹ In 1592 Elizabeth again interfered in the execution of the coronor's duties. In November of that year a letter was sent to the Lord Mayor regarding one Herick, a goldsmith, who was supposed to have committed suicide by throwing himself from a great height.⁷² It appears that some persons had declared that the fall was accidental. If this were true, the queen's almoner would be deprived of some goods which otherwise would have gone to him. Elizabeth therefore required the mayor to summon before him the coroner and charge him to receive no verdict by inquisition until the evidence that the almoner had, be thoroughly known and given him. According to the charter of Edward VI, which gave Southwark to the city, the mayor, commonalty and citizens were privileged to appoint two coroners for the borough, and were to have all waifs and estrays, treasure trove and deodands.⁷³

London was again treated as a shire in the appointment of the mayor as chief of the collectors of money for the crown. In 1524, however, when the most prominent men of every shire were appointed to give orders to the people that one-sixth of

⁶⁹*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 39.

⁷⁰Remem., 426.

⁷¹A. P. C., 1578-1580, 128.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 1592, 289.

⁷³Historical Charters, 117.

every man's substance be given to the king, Wolsey was made principal officer of the commission for London.⁷⁴ Accordingly the cardinal sent for the mayor and certain aldermen and demanded that the money be paid. So great was the murmuring of the people, however, that this order was withdrawn and the people were given the privilege of offering what they wished. In 1540 the mayor, with the Earl of Sussex, the Lord Admiral, the Bishops of Durham, Winchester and London, was a commissioner in London for the collection of the subsidy,⁷⁵ while certain aldermen were appointed as assessors in their wards. At this collection foreign merchants residing in London were assessed with the citizens,⁷⁶ but the privy council directed the mayor to forbear collecting the sums levied on four French merchants until they should hear again from the king.⁷⁷ A short time after this he was directed to excuse three other foreigners.⁷⁸ In 1558 the mayor was directed to call all the collectors of the subsidy before him in order to charge them to make immediate payment to the exchequer of the sums collected.⁷⁹

The mayor was authorized to imprison any citizen who refused or neglected to pay his share of the subsidy. In 1595 and 1596 there were several persons imprisoned in the Counters for refusing to pay their assessments.⁸⁰ In 1600 arose the question whether English subjects holding houses in the city, but not citizens of London, ought to be taxed with the Londoners where the subsidy was collected. The mayor wrote to the privy council asking for advice regarding officers of the Court of Chancery, Court of Wards, King's Bench and Common Pleas who, living within the city, had refused to pay the fifteenth levied upon them for service of the queen.⁸¹

In the case of loans, also, it was to the mayor that the

⁷⁴Hall, *Chronicle*, 694.

⁷⁵A. P. C., VII, 48.

⁷⁶L. F. & D., II, VIII, 16, 112.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 361.

⁷⁸A. P. C., VII, 101, 109; L. F. & D., II, VIII, 16, 435.

⁷⁹A. P. C., 1556-1558, 366.

⁸⁰Remem., 24, 25.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 25.

crown appealed. In 1522 the king, wishing to borrow £20,000, sent to the city for the sum. The mayor requested this money of none but the wealthy citizens, who though protesting, agreed to give the required sum.⁸² In 1577 the mayor was asked to use all the influence he could command to induce the wealthy men of the city to contribute money for the expedition that was being planned for Cathay, in which the queen and many of the nobles were interested.⁸³

It is evident that in carrying out this part of his many duties the mayor was brought into close contact with the lords of the council. These functions of a royal official, which had been granted, one by one, to the city, may have served to exalt the office in the eyes of the statesmen and other prominent personages of the realm. At any rate, the mayor was treated with great respect by the officials of the crown. As has been said at the coronation banquet of the sovereign, the mayor claimed the privilege of serving as a steward, and as such sat at one of the principal tables in Westminster.⁸⁴ The Lord Mayor was present at the court in 1533, when he and the aldermen, the heads of the guilds and the French ambassadors were invited to be present at the christening of Elizabeth.⁸⁵ Three days after the death of Henry VIII the Lord Mayor was sent for to attend the parliament chamber at Westminster, where the Lord Chancellor declared the death of the sovereign and charged the mayor to look after the safeguard of London.⁸⁶ Again, in 1553, the Lord Mayor was invited to attend court at Greenwich and to bring with him six aldermen and six merchants of the staple and six merchant adventurers. Edward's death was then declared to them, while at the same time it was announced that the successions of the crown had been determined upon by letters patent, to which they were sworn and charged to keep secret.⁸⁷

⁸²Hall, *Chronicle*, 642.

⁸³A. P. C., 1575-1577, 391.

⁸⁴L. F. & D., H. VIII, 5, 584; Wriothesley, 21.

⁸⁵C. S. P., Spanish, 1531-1533, 789.

⁸⁶Wriothesley, I, 178.

⁸⁷*Chronicle History of Queen Jane and Queen Mary*, 2.

How great was the respect in which the office was held is shown by a statement contained in a diary kept by one of Elizabeth's contemporaries, to the effect that the Lord Mayor is the greatest magistrate in the realm at the death of a king or queen of England.⁸⁸

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAYOR AS A CITY OFFICIAL.

The mayor was also brought more or less in touch with the crown officials in carrying out those duties which pertained directly to the city. This was especially true with regard to his functions as dispenser of the hospitality of the city. When any members of the royal family or nobility passed through London, it was the Lord Mayor who met them at the limits of his jurisdiction and conducted them in state through the city. At such times an address of welcome was usually made by the recorder,¹ although in 1522, when Charles V, accompanied by Henry, rode through the city, it was "one Sir Thomas More" who addressed them.² After Anne Boleyn was proclaimed queen she rode through the city. At Chepeside the mayor and aldermen drew up in line while the recorder welcomed her in behalf of the city, and the Lord Mayor presented her with a purse of 1,000 angels.³ At the reception given to Anne of Cleves, 1540, the mayor and aldermen, accompanied by six men of each of the twelve principal companies, rode with the queen to Greenwich, while the remainder of the crafts went by water to the castle.⁴ In 1549, when Edward VI rode from South-

⁸⁸Manningham, 148.

¹Wriothesley, I, 19.

²Hall, 631.

³Wriothesley, 18.

⁴*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 43.

wark, the mayor and aldermen met him at St. Margaret's Church, Southwark, and rode before him to Charing Cross. There the aldermen stood in line until the king passed them, while the mayor continued his ride in front of the king to Westminster. In 1553, August 3, at the time of Wyatt's rebellion, the liverymen of all the companies were commanded to assemble in the Guildhall, as Mary had planned to speak to them.⁵ The mayor and aldermen met her at the outskirts of the city and conducted her to the hall. The former carrying his mace, rode beside the Earl of Arundel, who bore the city's sword.⁶ He had presented the sword to Mary, who had given it to the earl to carry through the city. At the time of the procession in honor of her marriage with Philip, the mayor presented the queen with his mace, signifying that he delivered his authority to her. As she redelivered it to him he carried it in front of her, while in front of him were borne the two swords.⁷ Again, two years later, when Philip and Mary passed through the city, the mayor bore the scepter in front of them.⁸ At Elizabeth's accession to the throne, too, the mayor carried the scepter before her.⁹ Many pageants were arranged for her, and at Charing Cross the recorder presented her with a heavy purse of gold.¹⁰ A year later, when she passed from Westminster to the Tower, although the journey was by water, she was conducted by the mayor, aldermen and liverymen of the companies.¹¹ In her progress of 1561¹² and again towards the end of her reign, the Lord Mayor, accompanied by the livery of the different companies, preceded her through London.¹³

In the same way the Lord Mayor was brought into close contact with the different ambassadors, as it was his duty to find

⁵Grafton, II, 539.

⁶*Chronicle Queen Jane and Queen Mary*, 14; *Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 81.

⁷*Chronicle Queen Jane and Queen Mary*, 146, 151.

⁸Machyn, 129.

⁹Hayward, *Annals of Elizabeth*, 10.

¹⁰Nichols, *Progresses of Elizabeth*, 38.

¹¹Hayward, *Annals of Elizabeth*, 14.

¹²Machyn, 263.

¹³Chamberlain's *Letters*, 29, 162.

accommodations for these representatives of foreign countries. In 1550 the privy council reprimanded the mayor for neglecting to provide the French ambassador with suitable lodgings, and ordered him to obtain a certain house immediately.¹⁴ In 1580 Sir Francis Walsingham wrote to the Lord Mayor requesting that a particular house be given the Spanish ambassador. But the Spaniard disliked the house offered and wished to obtain one outside of Temple Bar. This being beyond the city's jurisdiction, it was impossible for the mayor to obtain it for him.¹⁵ Three years later Elizabeth's secretary again wrote, requesting that the mayor provide the Swedish ambassador with "a fair and convenient house," as well as three handsomely furnished lodgings for members of his suite.¹⁶ In 1597 Elizabeth sent word to the mayor to have prepared for the Polish ambassador some well furnished house belonging to a citizen of London.¹⁷ In the same year the mayor was directed to have prepared one of two specified houses for the Danish ambassador. He was urged to have the house well furnished with hangings, beds and all necessary provisions of household stuffs.¹⁸ And again the next year the mayor was directed to provide lodgings for the deputies of the states of the United Provinces fitted out with all household necessities.¹⁹

Besides receiving and providing for the ambassadors the mayor also received all foreigners of note who came to the city. In 1520 the lords of the council sent word to Henry that the three gentlemen from France had been well received by the city officials.²⁰ When the Lord Admiral of France visited England, in 1535, he was received in the city with great solemnity by the mayor, aldermen and crafts.²¹ When peace had been declared between England and France, in 1546, the ambassador

¹⁴A. P. C., 1550-1552, 106.

¹⁵Remem., 10.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷A. P. C., 1597, 302.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 363.

¹⁹A. P. C., 1597-1598, 448.

²⁰L. F. & D., II. VIII, 7, 896.

²¹*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 37.

and his following rode in triumph through London, after having been welcomed by the chief officers of the city.²² The form of welcome which the city had planned for the French representatives, together with the address written in French, was submitted by the mayor to the privy council for correction.²³ When the admiral arrived the mayor, in behalf of the city, gave him a present consisting of flagons of wine and boxes of wafers, and wax torches and candles.²⁴ At the time of Philip's arrival in England the mayor gave order that bonfires be built in every street as a sign of welcome.²⁵ Usually the mayor met these foreigners at the limit of the city's jurisdiction, on rare occasions, however, he went outside the limits to greet noted persons.²⁶

One of the most important of his duties regarding the welfare of the metropolis was the mayor's oversight of the public health. As a health officer he had charge of the sanitary conditions of the houses, streets and lanes. In this he was aided by some minor officials of the city, the scavengers and the rakers, who were elected for this purpose in each ward. Any householder who neglected to keep his pavement in good repair or free from filth was reported. Because it was seen that the welfare of the people was endangered by the crowding of buildings in certain parts of the city, the mayor was directed to send a list of foreigners residing in the city, for it had been reported that they dwelt "pestered up in one place."²⁷ If it were found that such was the case, he was directed to separate them and to allow no more to reside in one place than he felt would be for the good of the city.²⁸ In order to lessen this congestion Elizabeth had issued a proclamation that no more buildings be erected in the city's limits. Hearing, however, that new build-

²²Hall, 867.

²³A. P. C., 1542-1547, 494.

²⁴*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 51.

²⁵Wriothesley, 172; Machyn, 66.

²⁶Wriothesley, 124.

²⁷Stow (ed. 1633), 657; Coke, *Fourth Institute*, 249.

²⁸A. P. C., 1571-1575, 130, 190.

ings were nevertheless being constructed, the privy council ordered the mayor to send the names of all violators of this edict.²⁹ In 1590 another proclamation was issued which required the observance of the statute declaring against the placing of filth within a certain number of miles of the city. By it the mayor was directed to give special commands to the sheriffs of Middlesex that all deposits of refuse be instantly reported.³⁰

In order to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, the city's executives effected a quarantine by marking the infected houses. Sometimes this was accomplished by painting crosses on the doors, but, as these were easily erased by unscrupulous persons, the privy council directed that red crosses be nailed on the doors,³¹ and watches placed before the houses to prevent the departure of any one from the contaminated house.³² With the same end in view, the mayor endeavored to keep all public places clean and wholesome, and to prevent the gathering of large crowds to witness the performance of dramas and shows.³³ That the disease might not spread beyond the city in times of plague, no one was permitted to leave London without permission from the mayor.³⁴ At the time of the christening of Edward, in 1537, Henry sent word to the mayor to make proclamation forbidding anyone to attend the ceremony without the king's express invitation.³⁵ In 1582 the mayor of Oxford sent word to the mayor of London to restrain not only the merchants dwelling in infected houses from attending the annual fair, but as well all merchandise that had been kept in such houses.³⁶

In 1593, when it seemed as if the city officials were lax in their attempts to check the disease, the privy council commanded the mayor with six of the aldermen to appear before

²⁹C. S. P., 1581-1590, 29.

³⁰A. P. C., 1590, 430.

³¹*Ibid.*, 1592-1593, 374.

³²Remem., 331.

³³Norton, in Collier's Reprints, III, 14.

³⁴Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 224.

³⁵L. F. & D., H. VIII, 12, II, 894.

³⁶Remem., 332.

the Court of Star Chamber to render an account of his actions with regard to the plague.³⁷

During term time, when the city was accustomed to have a larger population than at other seasons of the year, additional precautions were taken. At such times it was the custom of the mayor to make a list of those places where lodging might be had. The houses that had contained any cases of infection during the two months previous to this were marked in such a way that no one would lodge or take meals therein. In making these catalogues the mayor endeavored to have the accounts written in so condensed a form that each one might be easily contained on one face of a sheet of paper, so that they might be hung in convenient and conspicuous places.³⁸

In the early summer of 1580, when the plague was known to be raging in Lisbon, the mayor wrote to Burghley requesting that he might be empowered to take such precautions upon the arrival of the ships from the port that the disease might not spread through the city.³⁹ A week later the mayor received a letter from the court authorizing him to take measures to prevent the merchants or mariners from lodging in the city or suburbs. The mayor was further authorized to direct the merchants not to discharge their merchandise until the goods had had time to be completely aired. Burghley also suggested that the mayor confer with the officers of the port regarding the best means to prevent infection.⁴⁰

After the dissolution of the monasteries the hospitals of the city were placed in charge of the mayor.⁴¹ So early as 1538 Sir Thomas Gresham, then mayor, wrote to the king asking that the mayor and aldermen might have rule of the three hospitals near London. A few years after this privilege was granted by Henry.⁴² In order then that a person might be admitted to

³⁷A. P. C., 1592-1593, 23.

³⁸Wright, *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, II, 183.

³⁹Remem., 330.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹An account of the hospitals of London will be found in Leonard, *English Poor Relief*, p. 26, *seq.*

⁴²L. F. & D., H. VIII, 2, 492.

Bethlehem, it was necessary to apply to the mayor. In 1550 the privy council requested that two demented women be received into the hospital.⁴³ Again one Hawkins was sent by the lords of the council to be admitted to either Little St. Bartholomew or Bethlehem, according as the mayor should decide which hospital would be the better one.⁴⁴ In 1557 the mayor was directed not only to have one Thomas Barrow committed to Bethlehem, but also to ascertain the whereabouts of his friends in order that they might be notified to look after him.⁴⁵

A list of the lands belonging to the hospital in Southwark was given to the Lord Mayor shortly after the borough was granted to the city, with the amount of allowances due to the poor.⁴⁶

The attitude which the mayors of London assumed with regard to dramatic performances within the city was consistent with their policy as health officers. The dread of contagion and the dislike of crowds had early led the mayors to refuse the liberty of acting to dramatic companies. So early as 1543 certain players belonging to the Lord Warden were sent to the Counter for acting against the mayor's order.⁴⁷ From that time on there were a number of persons imprisoned for like offenses, some of whom were released by order of the privy council, on condition that bonds were given that they would desist from further acting until especially licensed by the council.⁴⁸ Similar orders, combined with the request that all actors who had been directed to play before the queen be granted the opportunity of practising in the city, constitute a large part of the correspondence between the mayor and the lords of the council.⁴⁹ In 1584 the Lord Mayor sent two aldermen to the court to confer with the privy council concerning the suppression and demolition of the *Theatre* and the *Curtain*. Except for the

⁴³A. P. C., 1550-1552, 124.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 1552-1554, 72.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 1556-1558, 68.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 1550-1552, 242.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 1543, 109.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 1546, 407.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 1571-1575, 373; *ibid.*, 1577-1578, 144, 436; Remem., 352.

Lord Chamberlain and the Vice-Chamberlain, all of the lords agreed to the project.⁵⁰ In 1589 the Bishop of London was directed to confer with the Master of the Revels and one appointed by the mayor of London for the purpose of examining plays.⁵¹

Closely connected with his duties as health officer was the mayor's work with the poor of London. In 1595, on account of the great suffering in the city, the Mayor not only gave orders that no corn was to be shipped by London merchants, but he also wrote to the Lord Treasurer begging him to intercede for the release of corn ships detained at Sandwich. He also asked the Lord Treasurer to urge the queen not to issue any licenses for the exportation of corn, on account of the great scarcity of grain throughout the realm.⁵² The next year, as the famine had not abated, the council ordered the mayor to see that the wheat contained in certain vessels from the eastern counties be used for the poor and not engrossed by persons who wished to buy great quantities to sell again at high prices.⁵³

Besides preventing the exportation of grains, the mayor endeavored to facilitate the importation of wheat and rye. In 1596 the queen was informed by the mayor that the London merchants would earnestly strive to obtain wheat and rye from foreign countries, provided the vessels might enter port free of all duties. In order to relieve the stress, Elizabeth sent word to Burghley that the discharge of customs should date from October 25, and should continue during her pleasure.⁵⁴

The mayors further tried to relieve the suffering of the poor by having alms given discriminately.⁵⁵ To prevent promiscuous giving, "whereby those who were more deserving

⁵⁰Wright, *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, II, 228.

⁵¹A. P. C., 1589-1590, 214. For a fuller discussion of this matter see Collier, *Annals of the Stage*.

⁵²Remem., 378.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 376.

⁵⁴Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VI, 507.

⁵⁵This was prior to the poor law of 39 Elizabeth. Miss Leonard, *English Poor Relief*, p. 22 *seq.*, has shown that the municipalities were the first secular institutions engaged in a systematic care of the poor.

of prison than of alms" received a great share, the mayor gave directions that collection for the poor should be taken at Paul's Cross after service, and that the money so given should be distributed weekly to those who had the greatest need of it.⁵⁶ In cases where there was especial need the mayor directed certain well known and discreet persons to make the collections and distributions of money.⁵⁷ A conference regarding the poor in the city was held between the youthful king and the Bishop of London in 1551. The bishop advised the king to write to the mayor asking for information concerning the city's plans of dealing with its paupers.⁵⁸ The mayor, aided by two aldermen and six commoners, drew up a schedule of the degrees of poverty existing in London. By this it was shown that different grades of poor were sent to different hospitals in the city. This systematic report so pleased Edward that he gave the income of certain lands to the city for the maintenance of these institutions.⁵⁹

In 1571 the privy council called the attention of the mayor to the number of beggars that were permitted in the streets. He was urged to use some means, preferably by consultation with the Bishop of London, whereby the valiant and strong beggars might be punished and the poor and impotent might be provided for.⁶⁰ Again in 1576 the mayor was urged to follow the example of his predecessor, who had formed a means of ridding the streets of the great number of vagabonds and beggars by providing work for many of the unemployed.⁶¹

The mayor had some oversight, too, of ecclesiastical and theological matters in the city. When Henry's breach with Rome was complete the Lord Mayor was commanded to declare throughout the city that the Pope was but Bishop of Rome, and

⁵⁶A. P. C., 1571-1575, 52: Wriothesley, I, 77.

⁵⁷Remem., 129.

⁵⁸Grafton, II, 530.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 531.

⁶⁰A. P. C., 1571-1575, 52.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 1575-1577, 247.

as such was worthy of no allegiance from the people of England.⁶²

In the same year the Bishop of London examined the belief of John Firth and Andrew Hewet, and after finding them guilty of heresy delivered them to the mayor for punishment.⁶³ At the trial of heretics in the Guildhall, in June, 1546, the accused persons, by acknowledging their belief, were declared "guilty by their own confession," without trial by jury. In the list of justices the name of the Lord Mayor occurs first.⁶⁴ A week later the heretics were burned, and the Lord Mayor, with the Duke of Norfolk and other members of the council and certain aldermen, sheriffs and judges, was a spectator.⁶⁵ In July of the same year the mayor, with the Duke of Norfolk, was again present at the burning of heretics in Smithfield.⁶⁶

In 1553 and 1554 the trial of heretics took place, not in the Guildhall, as in Henry's time, but in St. Paul's, again before the commission composed of the mayor, the bishop and members of the council.⁶⁷ Later in that year the same commission sat in judgment of a monk of Ely who had struck a priest of Westminster while the latter was conducting mass. He was condemned, being imprisoned at Newgate after having his hand cut off.⁶⁸ On December 16 the Dean of Winchester was tried before the mayor and bishop in St. Paul's. Being convicted, he was burned two days later at Smithfield.⁶⁹

In the early part of 1548 the mayor reported to the Lord Protector that he and the Bishop of London had found the wardens and curate of the parish church of St. Martin's guilty of destroying the crucifix and images of the saints. Instead of these they had placed about the church certain texts of scripture and had painted the king's arms where the crucifix had

⁶²L. F. & D., II. VIII, 5, 1487.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 6, 761.

⁶⁴Wriothesley, 167.

⁶⁵*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 51.

⁶⁶Wriothesley, 169.

⁶⁷Machyn, 83; *Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 77; Wriothesley, 129.

⁶⁸Machyn, 85.

⁶⁹Wriothesley, 132.

been. The mayor was directed to see that the wardens and curate followed the form established by the king for the realm.⁷⁰ A similar case of extreme protestantism in Elizabeth's reign was punished by the mayor by closing the doors of the church and imprisoning the persons concerned in the destruction of images and sacraments.⁷¹

In 1574 it was declared that English citizens who were found guilty of hearing mass should be imprisoned until they had paid their fines.⁷² In 1580 one of the attorneys of the city was thought to hold extreme beliefs; the mayor accordingly sent him for examinations to the Bishop of London and dismissed him from his office in the city. The bishop, after questioning him, found his faith conformed with the queen's belief, and requested that he be reinstated as city attorney.⁷³ As the mayor did not immediately comply with his request, the bishop wrote to the lords of the council, declaring that as the attorney was conformable in religion he ought not to be removed from his position. The privy council therefore urged the mayor to readmit him.⁷⁴ In 1581 it was feared that many Recusants had left their homes in the rural districts and had gone to London, hoping, in the crowded city, to escape detection. The mayor was consequently ordered to direct the aldermen and deputy of each ward to make inquiries of all persons that had lately come to the city from the country, and to see that each person attended church.⁷⁵ A few months later the mayor was authorized to release all persons imprisoned for non-conformity, provided they could furnish bonds and securities. In being given their liberty, it was urged, they were more likely to come into contact with those who would give them instruction. If, however, it was found that they remained obstinate, proceedings were to be immediately instituted against them.⁷⁶ In order to

⁷⁰A. P. C., 1547-1550, 25.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 1558-1560, 77; *ibid.*, 1571-1575, 173.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 270.

⁷³Remem., 124.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 127.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

make the search thorough the mayor ordered the sheriffs to assist him.⁷⁷

In dealing with the foreign Catholics the mayor had to treat with the ambassadors, who were permitted to hold mass for their households, and who, in their zeal, admitted more than foreigners to their services. In 1560 a number of persons who had heard mass at the French ambassador's were imprisoned.⁷⁸ Three years later, in order to prevent this evil, the mayor ordered the foreigners to appear before him once a week to receive systematic training in religion.⁷⁹ After the mayor and aldermen had questioned them regarding their creed, certain ones were sent to the Bishop of London for further examination.⁸⁰ Those judged guilty were returned to the Lord Mayor for punishment,⁸¹ which consisted in banishing them from England.⁸² As another means of preventing the attendance of English subjects at these Catholic services it was proposed to give the ambassadors houses only in conspicuous parts of the city, so that persons entering the doors might be easily observed.⁸³ It will be remembered that one of the mayor's duties consisted in providing lodgings for the ambassadors.⁸⁴

The command that the mayor imprison all priests and seminaries was increased after the popish plots against Elizabeth were exposed. The mayor was directed to imprison persons known to be priests and Jesuits and to keep a list of all suspected persons, so that their actions might be carefully watched.⁸⁵

The apprehension of persons of the city concerned with the publication or possession of seditious books was also referred to the mayor. In 1546 the mayor was directed to examine the

⁷⁷C. S. P., 1581-1590, 198.

⁷⁸Nichols, *Progresses of Elizabeth*, 82.

⁷⁹C. S. P., Spanish, 1558-1567, 304.

⁸⁰C. S. P., 1547-1580, 426.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 437.

⁸²Wright, *Queen Elizabeth and her Time*, 10.

⁸³*Ibid.*, II, 87.

⁸⁴A. P. C., 1558-1560, 36.

⁸⁵Hist. MSS. Com., Rept. XII, Appendix IV, 297.

searcher and a grocer's apprentice with regard to certain heretical books which had lately been brought from Flanders.⁸⁶ Philip and Mary in 1558 directed the mayor to search the house of certain printers in London, who were suspected of having in their possession some books impugning the Catholic faith.⁸⁷ In 1580 the mayor submitted to the Bishop of London a pamphlet by one John Newman, papist, sent to him by a justice of the peace of Surrey.⁸⁸ In 1582 a drift of Catholic books was intercepted by the council. The books had been sent to some citizens of London, under pretense of being a barrel of worsted yarn. The Lord Mayor was directed to enter the houses of the men to whom they were addressed, to arrest the men and make search for other suspicious books.⁸⁹

In 1575 it was discovered that certain Anabaptists had recently come from foreign countries and had settled in London. The mayor was directed to act with the Bishop of London in conferring with them. If they did not prove amenable to reason, the Lord Mayor was authorized to proceed against them, using his judgment either in administering corporal punishment or in banishing them.⁹⁰

Closely connected with the part played by the mayor in the theological controversy was his position with regard to the religious life of the city. The wishes of the sovereign with regard to ecclesiastical affairs were made known to the Londoners through him. In 1551 he made proclamation that no holiday should be kept on St. Barnabas Day,⁹¹ and in 1559 he instructed the aldermen to declare in their wards that the Epistle and Gospel should be read in English in every parish church.⁹²

His oversight of religious matters consisted in the appointment of ministers to certain parish churches over which the city had the advowson, and in settling disputes between ministers

⁸⁶A. P. C., 1546, 409.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 1556-1558, 346.

⁸⁸Remem., 30.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 31.

⁹⁰A. P. C., 1571-1575, 370, 389.

⁹¹*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 67.

⁹²Wriothesley, I, 142.

and their congregations. The mayor made arrangement for the three days' preaching services following Easter and Whitsunday at St. Mary Spittle.⁹³ In 1581 Elizabeth appointed a certain person to take charge of the singing in Christ Church. At once the Bishop of London wrote to the mayor urging him to fill the position, as the overseeing of the foundation, the placing and displacing of ministers and the appointment and hiring of conductors belonged wholly to the city.⁹⁴ The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1594 attempted to alter the regular service of the same church by having singing ministers placed there instead of the regular preachers. The mayor forthwith sent a petition from the inhabitants of the parish to the archbishop beseeching him to restore the former services.⁹⁵

Any person who preached in the city without having taken Holy Orders was punished by the Lord Mayor. In 1537 a bricklayer preached the Gospel from one of the windows of his house.⁹⁶ He was imprisoned by the mayor, but later, as he continued in his preaching, he was sent to Cromwell with the examinations and depositions taken at the trial before the mayor.⁹⁷

The mayor was also required to see that the proclamations regarding fasting during Lent and on holidays were carried out. In 1538 Sir Richard Gresham wrote to Cromwell that if the persons who had eaten meat on Ember days were not punished, they would likewise eat it on Fridays and Saturdays.⁹⁸ In 1543 the mayor was ordered to search throughout London for persons who had been guilty of eating flesh during Lent.⁹⁹ In the Lenten season of the year 1581 the mayor had the number of butchers in the city limited to five. Each of these were

⁹³Wriothesley, II. 2.

⁹⁴Remem., 126.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 131.

⁹⁶L. F. & D., II. VIII. 12, 11, 594.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 624.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 13, II. 384.

⁹⁹A. P. C., 1543, 108.

required to give bond that he would sell no meat except to those lawfully licensed to eat it.¹⁰⁰

When the spire of St. Paul's was burned Elizabeth wrote to the mayor advising him to take speedy orders for its repair. As an incentive to the people to give money towards its reconstruction, she delivered 1,000*m.* in gold and a warrant for 1,000 loads of timber to the mayor.¹⁰¹ Somewhat later she wrote again to the mayor informing him that she had deputed certain of her council to confer with him regarding its reconstruction.¹⁰²

Another of the functions of the mayor, that brought him into close connection with the people of London, was that of chief of the companies. On receiving any important directions from the crown, he immediately summoned the companies to meet in their respective halls, when the news was imparted to them. In 1533 much displeasure was felt by Henry VIII on account of action taken by many of the citizens at the sermon during the Easter festival. Because the preacher had recommended that special prayers be offered up for the health of Queen Anne, many persons left the church. The mayor, on account of the king's displeasure, caused all the crafts and guilds to assemble in their various halls, when he commanded them "not only to abstain from murmuring about the king's marriage, but to command their own journeymen and servants, and, a still more difficult task, their own wives, to refrain from speaking disparagingly about the queen."¹⁰³

Any information which the crown officials were desirous of having imparted to the companies was sent first to the Lord Mayor. In 1555 the lords of the council wrote to the mayor directing him to call all the merchants trading in Guinea before him and to command them to refrain from further traffic in those parts until further orders should be taken. This order was issued because of the claim that had been made by the King of Portugal to that district.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰Remem., 393.

¹⁰¹Hayward, *Annals of Elizabeth*, 88.

¹⁰²C. S. P., 1547-1580, 178.

¹⁰³C. S. P., Spanish, 1531-1533, 646.

¹⁰⁴A. P. C., 1554-1556, 162.

In case the citizens of London received ill usage at the hands of the crown officials, they appealed through the mayor to the privy council. In 1585 Sir Wolstan Dixie, the Lord Mayor, sent a petition of Richard Puttenham to the council, complaining of the treatment he had received from Mr. Seekford as Master of Requests.¹⁰⁵

Complaints against the mayor were made to the crown. In 1539 the Hungarian ambassador sent word to the queen of Hungary that he intended presenting the complaints of the emperor's subjects against the mayor to the Lord Privy Seal, and if he could not obtain justice, then he should apply to the king himself.¹⁰⁶ In 1598 Elizabeth wrote to Sir Richard Saltonstall, Lord Mayor of London, informing him of a complaint which she had received from the Lord Admiral regarding his interference in maritime affairs.¹⁰⁷ In 1581 John Aylmer, Bishop of London, sent a characteristic letter to the mayor complaining of his unbecoming treatment of himself and the clergy. Instead of referring the matter to Elizabeth, he said that if the mayor did not treat him with more respect he would admonish him from the pulpit of Paul's Cross, "when the Lord Mayor must sit, not as a judge to control, but as a scholar to learn, and the writer, not as John Aylmer, to be thwarted, but as John London, to teach him and all London."¹⁰⁸

From this examination of the mayor's duties as both a crown and city official, it is seen how much power was concentrated in his hands. Aside from this administrative work, which was carried out by him alone, there is that part of the official business of the metropolis which was performed by the conjoint action of the mayor and the board of aldermen. This will be considered after the duties of each alderman in his own ward have been discussed.

¹⁰⁵C. S. P., 1581-1590, 281.

¹⁰⁶L. F. & D., H. VIII, 14, I, 921.

¹⁰⁷C. S. P., 1598-1601, 57.

¹⁰⁸Remem., 128.

CHAPTER V.

THE ALDERMEN AND THEIR WARDS.

Besides those duties which were incumbent on him as the chief executive of the city, the Lord Mayor represented one of the twenty-six wards of London in the court of aldermen. To the Lord Mayor's title was added the name of the company to which he belonged, while to the twenty-five other aldermen was usually added only the name of the ward they represented, although they were frequently members of the principal companies and represented much wealth. On account of their reputation for riches they were often called upon to lend money to the crown. In 1558 three aldermen lent money to Elizabeth, for which they were permitted to collect interest at 12 per cent.¹ The truism that the wealth of the aldermen frequently exceeded that of the nobility of England is brought out by a letter of the Earl of Oxford to Burghley, in which he says that Alderman Haughton has so magnificent a home that few noblemen in England can equal it.² Much of the money had to be expended in the costly feasts which the aldermen as well as the mayor were required to give to the officials of London and strangers of note within the city.³ Then, too, the aldermen occasionally, at the request of the mayor, provided lodgings for the foreigners in London.⁴

Much money, too, was spent by the aldermen in the changes of apparel which was required of them as well as of the mayor. It was necessary for them to have gowns and cloaks of the same three colors, black, violet and scarlet, to wear on specified days. On the ordinary working days of the year the aldermen wore the black gowns; on holidays either the violet or scarlet, according to the solemnity of the day. The violet gowns were worn

¹C. S. P., 1549-1580, 111.

²*Ibid.*, 1595-1597, 57.

³L. F. & D., II. VIII. 2, 4348; Wriothesley, II, 69; Grafton, II, 398.

⁴Chamberlain's *Letters*, 66.

on more ceremonious occasions. The cloaks which were worn with these gowns were trimmed with fur for the winter months and with taffeta for the spring and summer months.⁵

The aldermen of the city were regarded by the crown officials as being equal to the justices of the peace of the shires. In 1526, when peace was declared between England and France, Wolsey commanded the attendance of the mayor and aldermen of London with the justices of the peace of the shires.⁶

According to an act of common council passed in the early part of the fifteenth century, when a vacancy occurred in the court of aldermen, the inhabitants of the ward left destitute elected four men. These names being submitted to the court of aldermen, one was chosen as being most worthy to represent the ward. The alderman-elect was then notified by the court to appear at a specified time before the mayor and aldermen for the purpose of taking his oath.⁷ In 1581, it was at the next regular meeting of the court of aldermen, that Mr. William Rowe, who had been elected by the court as the representative of Castle Baynard Ward, was directed to appear to be sworn into office.⁸ When the first alderman of Bridge Ward Without was chosen, he was elected, not by the inhabitants of Southwark, but by the mayor and aldermen of London.⁹

There was a system of rotation in office among the aldermen. When a ward was left vacant the usual procedure consisted in the removal of another alderman from the ward he had been serving to the unoccupied ward, leaving the new alderman to take his place. If the conditions of the act of 1402 were really carried out the inhabitants of the ward must have been particularly expeditious in their choice, for in several cases the new alderman was transferred from an old ward to a new one on the day that the death of the previous alderman occurred. A

⁵Stow (ed. 1633), 657.

⁶Grafton, II, 398.

⁷Wriothesley, II, 16.

⁸Remem., 2.

⁹Wriothesley, II, 40; Holinshed, III, 1024.

consideration of the different aldermen representing Langbourne Ward from 1572-1605 will show the system of rotation.

In 1572, February 19, John Langley, goldsmith, who had been elected alderman for Billingsgate Ward in 1566, removed from Queenhithe, where he had served as alderman for two years (having removed there in 1570, December 12), to Langbourne.¹⁰ He served as alderman for that ward until his death in 1578, February 4. On that date James Harvey, ironmonger, moved to the ward from Coleman Street Ward,¹¹ which he had served from December 11, 1571. He remained in office until his death, representing that ward. On the day of his death, June 25, 1583, George Barnes,¹² haberdasher, removed from Tower Street Ward to take his place. Previous to this time George Barnes had acted as alderman for Bridge Ward Without from October 26, 1574, to October 19, 1576. He continued as alderman for Langbourne Ward until August 8, 1587, when he removed to Bassishaw. August 9 Sir John Spencer,¹³ clothworker, was elected alderman of the ward. He was one of the few men elected sheriff without having acted as alderman, having been made sheriff in 1583. In 1594, October 8, Nicholas Mosley,¹⁴ clothworker, who had been elected alderman of Aldersgate in 1589, moved to Langbourne, where he remained until discharged in 1602, April 20. On that day Robert Lee,¹⁵ merchant tailor, removed to Langbourne from Cordwainer Ward, which he had represented from July 31, 1599. Prior to this he had been alderman of Walbrook from October 18, 1593, to July, 1599. At his death, on January 28, 1606, John Watts,¹⁶ clothworker, moved from Aldgate. Before this he had acted as alderman for three wards, having been elected for Aldersgate in 1594, October 26. He remained there until April 21, 1601.

¹⁰Remem., 276n.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 113n.

¹²*Ibid.*, 181n.

¹³*Ibid.*, 172n.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 80n.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 3n.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 287n.

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¹⁰Remem., 276n.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 113n.

¹²*Ibid.*, 181n.

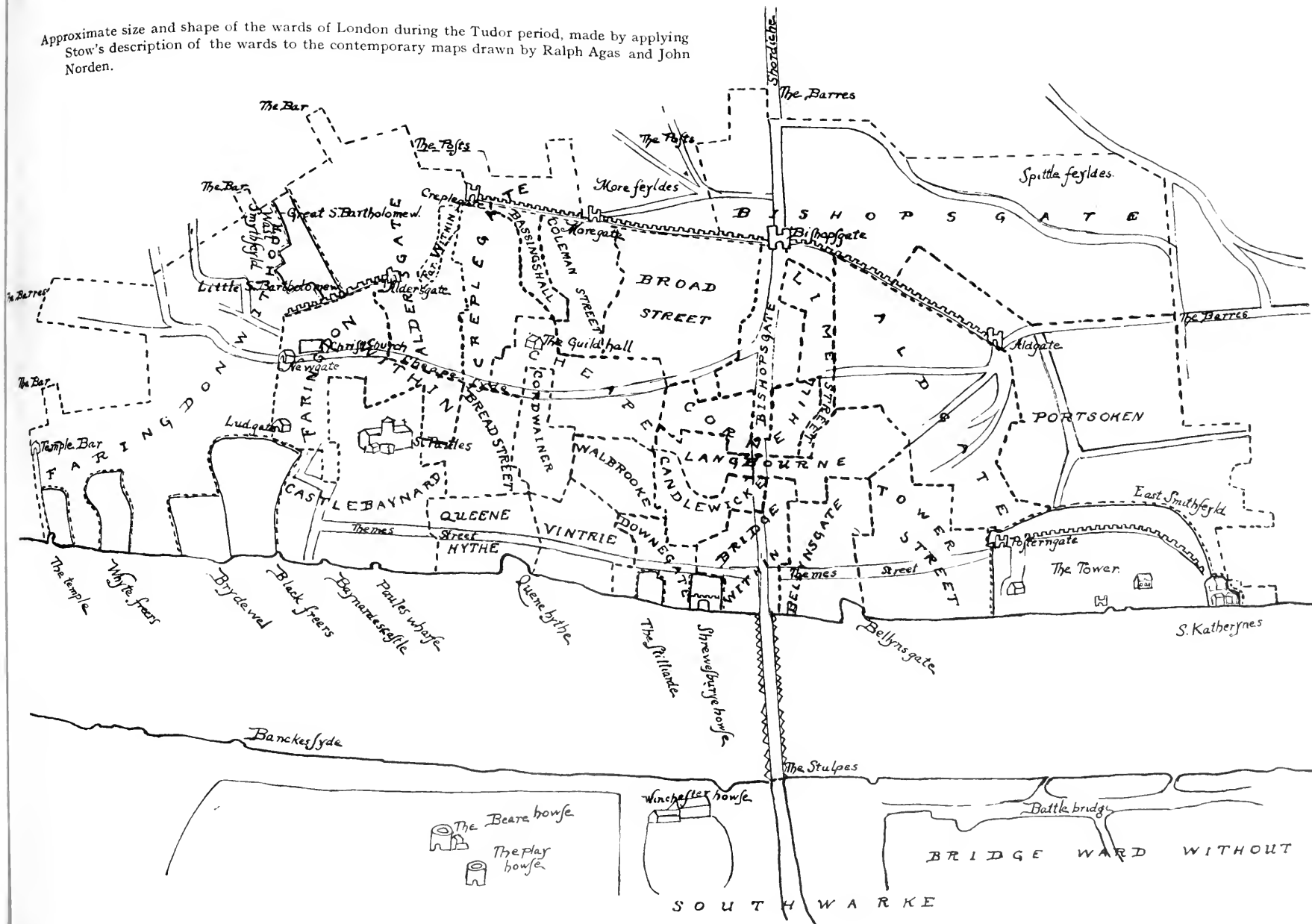
¹³*Ibid.*, 172n.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 80n.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 3n.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 287n.

Approximate size and shape of the wards of London during the Tudor period, made by applying Stow's description of the wards to the contemporary maps drawn by Ralph Agas and John Norden.



when he removed to Tower Street Ward, where he remained until May 29, 1605.

A glance, too, at the changes made in certain years shows the movements in the court of aldermen. If the elections took place in the wards, according to the act mentioned before, the death of an alderman must have necessitated in some cases as many as four different elections, or at the least two elections. In the early part of 1575, at the death of Roger Martin, Ambrose Nicholas was transferred to the vacant ward of Bread Street, leaving Walbrook, the ward he had represented, without an alderman.¹⁷ John Rivers, then alderman of Broad Street, removed to Walbrook.¹⁸ In his place as alderman of Broad Street Wolstan Dixie was elected February 4.¹⁹ That is, there were several changes among the aldermen after the death of Roger Martin, and it was not until the fourth change that a new man was added to the court of aldermen.

A similar change is seen in 1602, when, on April 20, Nicholas Mosley was successful in obtaining permission to resign his office, thus leaving Langbourne without representation.²⁰ On the same day Robert Lee moved from Cordwainer Street to Langbourne.²¹ It appears that the ward which he left vacant remained without representation till May 18, when William Craven moved from Bishopsgate to Cordwainer.²²

Whether the expression "removed" as used by the editors of the *Remembrancia* means really a change of abode, I am unable to state. According to the act of common council passed in Henry IV's reign, the aldermen were required to live in the wards they represented. This seems to have been the intention, too, of an earlier act, that of 1318, which declared that the goods of an alderman should be taxed with the other citizens of the ward in which he resided.²³ And again, a letter of 1589,

¹⁷Remem., 308.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 435.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 80.

²¹*Ibid.*, 3.

²²*Ibid.*, 211.

²³Strype, *Annals*, V. 363.

sent by the council to the mayor, seems to point towards the enforcing of the same idea. This letter complains of the action of the city in electing Mr. Giles Gurton as one of the aldermen of London. Previous to this time he had been elected sheriff, but as he did not wish to serve he paid the accustomed fine and was released from the office. Later he removed to Sussex, where he proved himself of so great value to the people of the county that they petitioned the privy council to have his election as alderman annulled. It was because the people of Sussex did not wish him to be removed from their county that the privy council wrote to the mayor urging that he be freed from all municipal offices.²⁴ In one of Chamberlain's letters to Dudley Carleton he speaks of the resignation of many of the aldermen, and in giving the reasons for their acts says that Sir Richard Mosley wished to resign so that he might go to the country to live;²⁵ and Cavendish gives an account of a quarrel which William Fitzwilliam had with the aldermen, which led him to resign his office and to depart into the country.²⁶ But a different light is thrown on the question by a letter which was sent by the privy council to Alderman Saltonstall, governor of the Merchant Adventurers and resident at Stode.²⁷ The frequent change of the aldermen from the representation of one ward to that of another also adds to the impression that they did not change their abode. Moreover, the fact that the alderman's deputy did reside in the ward would obviate the necessity of the alderman's living in the same district. It would seem then, that attempts were made by the city to compel the residence of the alderman in the ward which he represented, but that the attempts were not crowned with success, and that in some cases the alderman did not actually live within the city's limits. The latter, however, might have been but temporary.

A person who refused to accept the office of alderman after he was elected to the position was imprisoned until he agreed

²⁴A. P. C., 1588-1589, 4.

²⁵Chamberlain's *Letters*, 132.

²⁶Cavendish, *Life of Wolsey*, 189.

²⁷C. S. P., 1595-1597, 17.

to take the oath of office. In 1542 Thomas Blanke was elected alderman of Bishopsgate at the death of William Paget. As he refused to accept the office, he was committed to ward at the house of one of the sheriffs for five days. At the end of that time he took the oath of office, but was permitted to resign immediately, as he declared that he was unable to perform the duties required of an alderman.²⁸ He was required, however, to pay a fine of 400m. In 1547 John Wishe, who refused to accept the office of alderman, was imprisoned at Newgate from April 13 to April 21, when he took the required oath. He was then permitted to resign, on condition that he paid a fine of 300m.²⁹ He was compelled to pay but 100m. out of hand, being given a year and a quarter to pay the remainder. With this payment he was discharged of all the offices in the city. In 1571 Sir Richard Martyn agreed to accept the office of alderman on condition that the court of aldermen and court of common council agree that he should forever be free of the office of sheriff.³⁰

In 1545 Richard Jarvis, desiring to be discharged from his aldermanship, appealed to the privy council, which granted him letters patent freeing him from his office. Immediately after the mayor and aldermen went to Greenwich and spoke with the king and council so effectively that Jarvis returned to the court of aldermen.³¹ In 1558 the queen wrote to the Lord Mayor and aldermen requesting that Simon Lowe be exempt from the offices of sheriff and alderman during the time he remained in her service.³²

Quite similar to the process by which a man was freed from accepting the duties of alderman was that by which an alderman "gave over his robe." In each case application for the privilege of resignation was made to the mayor and aldermen. A sum was then named which the alderman was required to pay to the

²⁸Wriothesley, I. 134.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 183.

³⁰Remem., 1.

³¹Wriothesley, I. 154.

³²C. S. P., 1547-1580, 114.

city for his exemption from service. In 1549 the £500 paid out of hand by the retiring alderman of Portsoken was used for purchasing wheat for the city.³³ In 1550 Christopher Aleyn was required to pay 200m. for the privilege of resigning, 100 of which was to be paid at once and 100 to be paid in the next nine months. For the payment of the latter sum two sureties were bound with him. In 1551, when Robert Chersey resigned, he gave a house valued at £10 a year to St. Bartholomew's Hospital for the maintenance of the poor.³⁴

Sometimes aldermen were permitted to resign without being required to pay a fine to the city. In 1546 three aldermen,³⁵ and again, in 1550, one other were permitted to resign without payment of a fine.³⁶

For unseemly behavior an alderman was deprived of his office. The court of aldermen in 1587 wrote to one of their number requesting his resignation.³⁷ In August of 1602 Sir Richard Martyn, on "account of his unfitting demeanor and carriage," was removed from his aldermanship. In May he had appealed for permission to retire,³⁸ declaring that he was insolvent.³⁹ Evidently, however, the favor was not granted, and he gained his end by his misbehavior.

During their term of service the aldermen held other important positions in the city, in the House of Commons and in the great commercial companies. Thomas Seymer, alderman, had also acted as mayor of the staple at Westminster and mayor of the staple at Calais.⁴⁰ In 1595 Alderman Saltonstall was governor of the Merchant Adventurers at Stode.⁴¹ Aldermen were also appointed by the crown officials to positions within the city, answerable only to the crown. Sir Richard

³³Wriothesley, II, 15.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 47.

³⁵*Ibid.*, I, 163.

³⁶*Ibid.*, II, 39.

³⁷Remem., 2.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 3.

³⁹Chamberlain's *Letters*, 132.

⁴⁰L. F. & D., H. VIII, 5, 1065.

⁴¹C. S. P., 1595-1597, 17.

Martyn, who was elected alderman in 1597, continued to hold the office of Master of the Mint.⁴² In 1591 Alderman Henry Billingsley received a warrant of £400 a year for his services as collector of customs in London and £640 for the salaries of fourteen assistants at £40 a year.⁴³ In April, 1525, Sir John Munday, alderman of London, was appointed justice for the Merchants of the Steelyard on account of the negligence of Sir Lawrence Alymer in fulfilling the duties of the office. Sir Ralph Warren was appointed to the same position in 1537.⁴⁴ The aldermen frequently represented the city in the House of Commons. In 1554 and 1555, Martin Bowes; in 1557, William Garrard; in 1586, Edward Osborne; in 1588, George Barns, and in 1592, John Hart, aldermen, were elected as representatives of the city.⁴⁵

Each alderman was responsible for the general order of his ward. To enable him to carry out this part of his work, there was annually elected at the ward mote of each ward a number of men who were to act on the ward mote inquest.⁴⁶ The ward mote consisted of the householders of the ward, summoned to a meeting by the aldermen on the feast of St. Thomas.⁴⁶ The size of the ward mote inquest varied, each ward having its regular number. This number varied from twelve to twenty, Chepe and Candlewick having the smallest numbers, and Bridge Without and a part of Farringdon Without the largest numbers. Between these extremes were the other numbers, seven wards having thirteen men, six, fourteen, and so on. Lime Street, one of the smallest of the wards, had sixteen men on the inquest. The ward having the largest number of men on the inquest was Farringdon Ward Without. This ward was divided into three parts, and though there was but one alderman with his deputy to act for the entire ward, each part had its own distinct number

⁴²Remem., 1.

⁴³C. S. P., 1591-1594, 17.

⁴⁴L. F. & D., H. VIII, 4, 1298; *ibid.*, 12, II, 20.

⁴⁵Parl. Blue Books, 391, 393, 397, 418, 429.

⁴⁶Stow (ed. 1633), 657.

⁴⁷*Laws and Customs of London*, 185.

of common councilmen, scavengers, constables and ward mote men. For the ward mote, two parts had twelve each, with twenty for the third part. These inquest men had full power and authority for one year to inquire into all cases of misdemeanor in the ward. These cases were reported to the aldermen as often as he thought expedient. It was necessary, however, that he heard the reports of the inquest once a month at least.⁴⁸ The verdicts were given by parishes. The cases worthy of trial were indicted by the aldermen, and were brought before the court, meeting every every Monday in the Guildhall.⁴⁹

At any time of great disorder in the city the mayor might command the aldermen to repair at once to their wards and to require the inquest to make a direct report to them. In 1550, April, the mayor caused all the aldermen to inquire of their inquests concerning all misdemeanors since Candlemas. The trial of the indictments presented by the aldermen necessitated the mayor's court to sit for several days.⁵⁰

In case of death or removal of any of the grand jury the aldermen called a ward mote for a new election. The aldermen reported the non-appearance of all inquest men to the mayor, who saw they were properly punished.⁵¹

In addition to the election of the grand jury at the annual meeting in December, there were other officers chosen for the ward. "The most sufficient, honest and discreet men" of the ward were chosen for the common counceill⁵² for one year, and were sworn into office before the aldermen. The scavengers and constables were also elected at this time. The number of men chosen to act in these capacities was also determined by custom, the more congested parts of the city having a greater number of scavengers as well as constables. The number of the former officers varied from two to eighteen. Farringdon Within had the greatest number, while Bassishaw and Line Street had but

⁴⁸Stow (ed. 1633), 669.

⁴⁹L. F. & D., II, VIII, 3, 3657

⁵⁰Wriothesley, II, 36.

⁵¹Stow (ed. 1633), 669.

⁵²*Ibid.*

two each. The commonest number of scavengers for a ward was six; that of constables was eleven. Bassishaw again had the smallest number, two, and Farringdon Within the largest, seventeen. Finally the raker and beadle were elected at this meeting. The former acted with the scavengers in attending to the sanitary conditions of the streets, while the latter seems to have been the presiding officer of the grand jury of the ward, for, after giving the number of men on the ward mote inquest, Stow adds, "and the beadle." He also had much to do with the impanelling of the petty jury, as he was required to send the names of six substantial householders to the mayor, who then gave the list to the sheriffs. These persons were then summoned by the sheriff to appear at the court held in the Guildhall. The beadle was also connected with the constables. He was the custodian of the roll which the constables kept of their precincts. Innholders were required to report the names of all strangers remaining longer than two days to the constable. These names were then given to the beadle, who saw to it that each person remaining longer than two days was under frankpledge.⁵³ By means of this custom the aldermen were able to make reports of the number of foreigners dwelling within their wards.⁵⁴ The beadle likewise aided the constables in the arrest of disorderly persons.⁵⁵

At the ward mote there is no account of the election of the alderman's deputy. It would seem then that the alderman appointed the person to act in the ward for him. In 1550, however, after the alderman of Southwark had been sworn into office, he and the mayor rode through the borough. At the Bridge house a number of persons of the borough were assembled. To them the mayor presented the alderman and appointed two deputies to act with him for the preservation of order.⁵⁶ In each ward the deputy was responsible, with the constable, for the apprehension of persons guilty of misdemeanor. In 1591 a

⁵³Stow (ed. 1633), 670.

⁵⁴Hall, 829; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, IV, 223.

⁵⁵Middleton, *A trick to Catch the Old One*, II, 1; Remem., 266.

⁵⁶Wriothesley, II, 40.

letter was sent from the privy council to the mayor directing him to have the aldermen's deputies and constables of certain wards arrested, for they had not only neglected to commit to prison certain lewd and seditious persons, but had permitted them to wander up and down the streets.⁵⁷

The alderman's direct connection with his ward is seen in the muster of troops. It has been seen that when there was need of men for the military service, a commission specifying the number required of the city was sent to the mayor as Lord Lieutenant of London. After receiving his commission, the mayor sent his precept to the aldermen, requiring them to go to their wards for the purpose of enrolling a certain number.⁵⁸ When the muster was made, the aldermen examined the men to see that they were equipped with swords and daggers, and that those who were qualified to act as archers were provided with proper weapons.⁵⁹

In 1545, when the city furnished 1,500 men, there was a general tax of the fifteenth levied on the wards to provide for the equipment of arms. In order to prevent the delay that would necessarily accompany the collection of the tax, each alderman paid the sum required of his ward,⁶⁰ and afterwards reimbursed himself with the money collected. Preceding this muster of troops some members of the privy council sat in London and demanded a loan from the citizens to aid in the undertaking.⁶¹ Because one of the aldermen would not pay the sum required of him, he was sent as captain to Scotland.⁶²

When any money was to be granted by the city, each alderman went to his own ward and in the accustomed places urged the people to grant the sum that was required of them. In 1522, August 20, when it was necessary for Henry to have more ready money, Wolsey summoned the mayor and aldermen

⁵⁷A. P. C., 1591, 300.

⁵⁸Grafton, II, 460.

⁵⁹L. F. & D., II. VIII, 14, I, 940; Wriothesley, II, 16.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 159.

⁶¹*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 48.

⁶²Wriothesley, I, 151.

to appear before him. He then told them to assemble the people of wealth in the city, in order to ascertain the value of their property. Though the aldermen protested, the cardinal was obdurate. Each alderman, therefore, went to his own ward and named those who were reported to have goods of great value.⁶³ These then appeared before Wolsey and made the loan. Three years later, when the sixth part of every man's goods was demanded, the aldermen again assembled the people in their wards. The Londoners, however, openly refused to grant the request, declaring they had given enough money already.⁶⁴ In making the assessment for his ward it was customary for the alderman to take with him one or more of the chief commoners as he made the circuit of his ward. In 1545 each alderman, with two commoners, summoned before him all persons whose goods were valued above £40, and urged them to make a loan to the king on account of his affairs with Scotland and France. They also urged the people to pay immediately.⁶⁵

When a loan was required of the city the aldermen called before them only those persons whose property was valued above a certain sum. This limit varied in different years. In 1545 it was £40, while four years later half that sum was the minimum.⁶⁶ In 1576 those persons whose property was valued at £50 and upwards were assessed.⁶⁷ When a loan of £20,000, in 1553, was required from the city, the aldermen asked the money from those who could afford to pay £100 at least.⁶⁸ This sum was collected in a week's time, and was paid immediately to the queen's cofferer. When Elizabeth, in 1598, wanted to borrow £150,000 of the city, she offered to the aldermen as a security £500 of her land in mortgage and the customs of London.⁶⁹ If a person felt that the aldermen had charged him unduly he might appeal to the mayor for relief.⁷⁰

⁶³Hall, 645.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 698.

⁶⁵Wriothesley, I, 155.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, II, 23.

⁶⁷C. S. P., 1547-1580, 43.

⁶⁸Wriothesley, II, 102.

⁶⁹Chamberlain's *Letters*, 31.

⁷⁰L. F. & D., II, VIII, 8, 476.

One of the most important of the alderman's duties in connection with his ward was his oversight of the watch. Ordinarily it was the duty of the alderman's deputy and the constables to see that the peace was duly kept by the inhabitants of a ward, but in times of great excitement the aldermen remained with the constables to see that they performed their duty. At the time of the great rising of the apprentices of London against the foreigners the mayor sent for all the aldermen to appear at the Guildhall, where it was announced that the privy council had heard that a general rising was feared for the next day. Each alderman then went to his ward and sent word that no man should leave his house after nine o'clock till seven the next morning, and that no watch should be kept.⁷¹ This last condition was imposed because it was asserted that it was impossible to tell who might be connected with the plan, and it would be dangerous to keep any armed men in the city. The aldermen were directed to ride about the city to see that the orders were carried out. When the rising did occur, the city officials were severely reprimanded by Henry, who declared that if the aldermen had not connived at the plot the disorder could not have occurred.⁷²

At other times, when a riot or conspiracy was feared, the constables' watch was increased by the addition of "honest householders" of the ward.⁷³ In 1531 the mayor received word from the privy council that the king desired all physicians to be excused from the watch by night.⁷⁴ While watching during the night was consigned to the householders of the wards, the gates of the city were guarded during the day by members of the companies.⁷⁵ In 1551 the watch was particularly strong. Early in the year the mayor and certain aldermen were required to appear before the privy council, where they were informed of Somerset's conspiracy, and were directed to see that order was

⁷¹Hall, 588.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 590.

⁷³Wriothesley, I, 159.

⁷⁴L. F. & D., II. VIII. 5, 549.

⁷⁵*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 65.

maintained in the city by four distinct methods, viz., by the watch, by correction of vagabonds, by repulsion of strangers coming into the realm, and by the reformation of disorders in the churches.⁷⁶ In October they were again before the council, when it was declared that a watch of the householders should be kept at night from nine to five.⁷⁷ Two days after the court of aldermen sent precepts to certain of the head companies requiring them to place two men at each gate of the city, to remain there from six to seven, to see that no masked men or masterless person entered the city.⁷⁸ This was maintained for one month's time, when the court of aldermen attempted to dispense with the watch by day.⁷⁹ But the next day orders were sent to the mayor directing him to double the guard and to see that a privy watch was made throughout the city twice a week.⁸⁰ A week later another message was sent to the mayor directing that the city be well guarded during the next day and night.⁸¹ Responding to the request, the mayor sent for the aldermen and then declared to them that for the safeguard of the city every alderman should, by himself or by his deputy, cause every constable to warn all the householders in his precinct to look after his household and family, and to see that all kept within doors.⁸²

In addition to the watch of the householders and constables in times of excitement the aldermen or their deputies were required to ride about the city during the night watches.⁸³ In 1551 each alderman in his turn appointed two of the common councilmen to ride in his place.⁸⁴ These men were to see that no constable opened the gates of the city. At the time of Mary's accession two aldermen or their deputies rode about the city, both within and without the walls, accompanied by eight of the

⁷⁶A. P. C., 1550-1552, 257.

⁷⁷Wriothesley, II, 57.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 58.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 62.

⁸⁰A. P. C., 1550-1552, 425.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 432.

⁸²Wriothesley, I, 62.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 23.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 58.

common councilmen.⁸⁵ In 1554 news of an uprising in Kent was brought to the Lord Mayor by the Lord Chamberlain, whereupon a court of aldermen was summoned for that afternoon. This court decided that the mayor should ride about the city during that night and every succeeding night until the danger should be over, two aldermen should oversee the watch.⁸⁶

The so-called watches held on St. John's (midsummer) and St. Peter's eves were rather elaborate and gorgeous processions through the streets, lighted with bonfires and torches, than marches through the city for the preservation of order. On these days the chief officers of the city, accompanied by the mayor's special officers and some of the more prominent members of his company, marched through the city from one side to the other. Besides this, there were the persons taking part in the pageants and the Morris dances.⁸⁷ It was customary, too, for the wealthier citizens to place tables covered with viands and drinks on the pavements in front of their houses, "whereof they would invite their neighbors and passengers also to sit and be merry with them in great familiarity."⁸⁸

On account of the expenditure that must necessarily accompany so great a display, the citizens were forbidden to hold the watch at times when they had been already at great expense. The first order that the watch be dispensed with, came from the crown in 1539, and seems to have caused much discontent among the people at large.⁸⁹ That year the city had been at great expense but a few weeks previous to midsummer in fitting out the muster of citizens at Mile End. As the order from Henry did not reach the city until ten days before the vigil of St. John, the mayor and his officers had already prepared the pageants and the order of marching. Five years later, because of the expense of the wars, the show accompanying the watch was again given over, although the mayor and the sheriffs rode through

⁸⁵Wriothesley, I. 87.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 107.

⁸⁷Stow, 127.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 126.

⁸⁹Wriothesley, I. 100.

the city and the aldermen marched through their particular wards.⁹⁰ Two years after the court of aldermen attempted to abolish the institution entirely by declaring that on neither midsummer's nor on St. Peter's eve should the watch be held; instead one hundred constables preceding the mayor and his officers should march through the city.⁹¹ Two years later, however, during the mayoralty of Sir John Gresham, the pageantry was revived with a great display of splendor and wealth.⁹² After that the show was again forbidden,⁹³ and in its place the mayor and aldermen were required to march through the city to seek out offenders.⁹⁴

Besides the processions on these two days, there were certain other holy days on which the mayor and aldermen were expected to attend divine service in a body. On Twelfth Day,⁹⁵ Candlemas,⁹⁶ Palm Sunday,⁹⁷ Good Friday,⁹⁸ Whitsuntide,⁹⁹ they heard sermons at Paul's Cross. Except for Good Friday and the Tuesday in Whitsuntide, when violet was worn, they wore their scarlet gowns at all these services.¹⁰⁰ The three days following Easter they attended service at St. Mary Spital, again, except for Wednesday, when they wore violet, wearing their scarlet robes.¹⁰¹ On the eve of St. Bartholomew they attended service at St. Magnus' Church, after which they rode through the fair.¹⁰² At the services in St. Paul's the mayor sat in the dean's seat or in the choir. When the services were in St. Paul's

⁹⁰*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 47.

⁹¹Wriothesley, I, 166.

⁹²*Ibid.*, II, 3.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 41.

⁹⁴A. P. C., 1558-1560, 107.

⁹⁵Nichols, *Progresses of Elizabeth*, 82.

⁹⁶Machyn, 225.

⁹⁷Wriothesley, II, 35.

⁹⁸Stow (ed. 1633), 652.

⁹⁹Wriothesley, II, 14, 40; Letter Book V, 236b, in Simpson, *St. Paul's*, 89.

¹⁰⁰*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 89.

¹⁰¹Machyn, 131.

¹⁰²Stow (ed. 1633), 652.

Churchyard, seats were placed for the mayor, aldermen and their wives.¹⁰³

The processions to the church and in the church, which had been abolished by Henry except in cases of particular solemnity, as at the thanksgiving service at the birth of Edward, were revived by Mary.¹⁰⁴ In 1553, on St. Andrew's day, a general procession was begun in St. Paul's Church, with the parsons and curates of London and the mayor and some of the aldermen. This was continued for three days following.¹⁰⁵ A general procession through London, consisting of the school children, sextons, clerks, priests, bishops and mayor and aldermen in their liveries, was held in 1555.¹⁰⁶ In Elizabeth's time processions were abolished for all days except All Soul's Day, when the aldermen and sheriffs met at the mayor's house, wearing their scarlet gowns and cloaks trimmed with fur.¹⁰⁷ At the Guildhall they were met by the mayor's company, with the bachelors and gentlemen ushers, who walked before them, in the procession to Paul's. This procession, however, was more in the nature of a ceremonial connected with the installation of a new mayor than of any particular religious significance.

Sometimes the aldermen were required to act as the custodians of prominent persons who had been guilty of misdemeanors.¹⁰⁸ In 1554 the Duke of Suffolk and Lord John Grey were confined at the house of Sir Christopher Warren for three days, after which they were taken to the Tower.¹⁰⁹ In 1579 Alderman Dixie held as a prisoner, by order of the privy council, the wife of one Johnson. He was directed to keep her as a close prisoner, allowing no one to hold conference with her until she had been examined by the recorder and Thomas Norton.¹¹⁰ In 1586 William Copley was committed to the

¹⁰³Letter Book V, 224, 237, in Simpson, *l. c.* 89; Wriothesley, I, 35.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 65, 69.

¹⁰⁵*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 85.

¹⁰⁶Machyn, 92.

¹⁰⁷Stow (ed. 1633), 657.

¹⁰⁸Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, V, 139.

¹⁰⁹*Chronicle Q. Jane and Q. Mary*, 53.

¹¹⁰A. P. C., 1578-1580, 289.

care of Alderman Radcliffe during the time that the council was at Fotheringay. The alderman wrote to Secretary Davison that he found the young man "so tractable as to be easily won to be a good Christian."¹¹¹ In 1600 Sir Robert Drury was committed to the custody of Alderman Saltingstall because he had spoken in the blustering way about living in France.¹¹²

The body of aldermen, as well as the mayor, was regarded by the crown officials as an important factor in the municipal life of London. At the accession of Edward VI the mayor and aldermen, dressed in their scarlet robes, awaited the king's herald in the Guildhall, and then accompanied him to St. Magnus' Church, where proclamation of Henry's death and Edward's succession to the crown was made.¹¹³

CHAPTER VI.

COURT OF ALDERMEN.

In addition to the functions which the aldermen exercised within their own wards, they controlled to a great extent the life of the city by the rules and regulations which they enacted in the court of aldermen. This court, consisting of the mayor and the aldermen, was held in the Guildhall every Tuesday and Thursday, except holidays and the week preceding Christmas¹ and Easter, and the summer vacation.² It might also be summoned at any other time by the mayor. It regulated the watch and the training of the soldiers; it disposed of the property and the lands of the city; it advised the mayor in questions relating to the price of foods and the issuing of proclamations, and it settled all disputes over admittance to the freedom of the city, as

¹¹¹C. S. P., 1581-1590, 365.

¹¹²Chamberlain's Letters, 98.

¹¹³Wriothesley, I, 178.

¹Stow (ed. 1633), 664.

²Wriothesley, II, 87.

well as all those controversies between companies which were referred to it by the mayor.

Although the order that the city should be safely guarded in any times of danger was sent to the mayor, it was the court of aldermen that decided upon the manner of executing this command. In 1549, when there was a general fear lest the rebellion of Somerset should spread through the city, the mayor summoned the court of aldermen. There it was decided that the mayor should ride about the city to see that the constables kept the hours of the watch that had been appointed by the last court of aldermen, and that every night following for three months each alderman should ride in his turn.³ But as the danger increased rather than abated, it was decided at a court held at the expiration of that period that two aldermen should ride about the city every night and that the companies should guard the gates of the city by day.⁴ In 1550, too, a court decided that two aldermen should ride through the city by night to oversee the watch, one taking the eastern and the other the western part of the city.⁵ When the dread of a rising diminished, the court of aldermen discharged the watch by day and night.⁶ The midsummer watch, too, it has been seen, was abolished by the court of aldermen.⁷

When the mayor received his commission for raising and training a specified number of men, he assembled a court of aldermen in order to decide on the best means of furnishing and providing practice for the required quota. In 1580 the court decided that Mile End Fields would be the most convenient place to use for the training of 3,000 shot and 1,000 pike men. They requested that permission to use the land might be granted to them.⁸ In 1583 the lords of the council, in writing to the mayor and aldermen, stated that a number of complaints had

³Wriothesley, II. 15.

⁴*Ibid.*, 24.

⁵*Ibid.*, 39.

⁶*Ibid.*, 28.

⁷*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 47.

⁸*Remem.*, 231.

been received by them regarding the condition of archery. They directed that a court of aldermen should take orders that the statute which had been established for the maintenance of archery be put in execution.⁹

The mayor and aldermen assembled in this court had control of the property belonging to the municipality. It was through their action in 1550 in agreeing to pay 1,000m. for the land that the liberties of Southwark came into possession of the city.¹⁰ The houses on London Bridge belonging to the city were leased by the court to tenants. In 1579 two houses on the bridge had been torn down and rebuilt. Burghley wrote to the court of aldermen requesting that the former tenants might occupy the houses with but slight increase in the rent, even though a higher rent might be offered by others.¹¹ The mayor in reply stated that the houses had been demolished because the bridgemasters had declared them unfit for occupation. The tenants being afraid to live in them had given up absolutely the unexpired term of their former leases, and had rejected the new leases which were offered by the city authorities.¹² In 1582 Sir Francis Walsingham intervened on behalf of a poor tenant of the city. He wrote to the mayor urging that a house recently leased by the aldermen to some one else be restored to its former occupant.¹³

The court had a definite mode of procedure established by custom regarding contests growing out of the leasing of property. The oldest aldermen were chosen as surveyors and were directed to hear the suitors in all cases of dispute, and to treat with them regarding the conditions belonging to their contracts. They then made a report to the court, which granted the leases accordingly.¹⁴

Permission to build within the city was granted or denied

⁹Remem., 16.

¹⁰Wriothesley, II, 36.

¹¹Remem., 36.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*, 176.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 470.

by the court. When Sir Thomas Gresham wished to erect the bourse, it was to the court of aldermen that he applied for permission. In one of Heywood's plays, where there is considerable reference to the building of this exchange, Gresham asks:

"What have our honorable court of aldermen

"Determined yet? Shall Gresham have a place

"To erect this worthy building to his name?"¹⁵

In 1567 a glassblower informed the queen's secretary that the court of aldermen had granted him permission to erect a house for making Normandy and Lorraine glass.¹⁶ In 1580 the request that a license be granted for building an enclosed alley, to be used for bowling in stormy weather, was refused because there were already three such alleys within the space of one-half acre of ground. Moreover, the character of the persons who resorted to the place was such that it did not warrant the license. It was declared that many of the poorest persons of the city resorted to the place, spending their time in idleness and their money in betting while their families were in danger of starvation.¹⁷ The request had been from Sir James Croft, but a letter received from him in 1582, two years later, is of a very different tenor. At this later date he and Walsingham wrote urging that the court of aldermen require the observance of the proclamation of Elizabeth forbidding the erection of buildings within three miles of the gates of the city of London.¹⁸ As the proclamation did not fulfil its ends, for new buildings were constantly being constructed within the city, the court was directed not only to ascertain the number of new houses built contrary to the proclamation, but was further directed to send the names of all the builders to the privy council, in order that they might be called before the Court of Star Chamber.¹⁹ Each alderman was commanded by the court to search his ward

¹⁵Heywood, *If You Know Not Me*, 106.

¹⁶C. S. P., *Addenda*, 1566-1579, 34.

¹⁷Remem., 165.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 44.

for cases of overcrowding. A request received in 1596 by the court shows the control the aldermen exercised over buildings in the city. It was urged that license to build a corn mill between two arches of the bridge be granted to a miller. In order to further his request, it was stated that such a mill would be of great service to the poor.²⁰

Connected with the oversight of buildings in the city is the action which was taken by the court of aldermen regarding the building of the great bridge at Stratford the Bow. The bridge being in great need of repair, assistance to aid in the work was asked of the city. The aldermen directed that a fund should be raised by collection of money in each parish. It was ascertained, however, that the care of the bridge belonged wholly to certain owners of the adjoining land. In view of this fact, they requested that it should be expressly stated in the record of the exchequer that the contribution was but voluntary, and as such should not be drawn into a precedent.²¹

The control of property and money belonging to minor heirs of London citizens was in the hands of this court. The money remained with the chamberlain of London until suitable persons to whom it might be lent were found by the aldermen. In 1594 Sir Robert Cecil applied to the mayor for the loan of some money belonging to the heirs of Sir Cuthbert Buckle. The mayor replied that he of himself was not empowered to lend the money, as the privilege belonged to the court of aldermen. The court had already bestowed some part of the money among the citizens, but the remainder, £1,500, was to be reported upon at the next court. He, therefore, advised Cecil to write to the aldermen regarding the loan.²² The day following this Cecil repeated his request in a letter written to both the mayor and aldermen.²³ In answer to this the court replied that all the estate had been given out immediately in loans to prevent the money's remaining in the hands of two very young men.²⁴

²⁰C. S. P., 1595-1597, 325.

²¹Remem., 34.

²²Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, V, 113.

²³Remem., 315.

²⁴Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, V, 114.

The minor children of deceased freemen were regarded as the wards of the city, and were placed under the charge of the mayor and aldermen.²⁵ The mayor was informed of the death of any freeman by the constables of the city. These officials were required to certify each month to the clerk of the mayor's court the names of any freeman who had died within his precinct, as well as the names of his children.²⁶ The common crier then summoned the widow or executor to appear before the court of the Lord Mayor and aldermen to bring an inventory of the testator's estate.²⁷ The common sergeant then took an account of the orphans' estates and signed the indentures before they passed to the Lord Mayor and aldermen, who then gave them to the chamberlain.²⁸

As guardian the Lord Mayor provided for the custody of the property and the marriage of the wards. In 1580 the mayor wrote to the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Lincoln and others, requesting that Clement Draper might have the custody of his wife's child by her former husband, as well as control over the child's legacy. The mayor added that the court of aldermen requested that the disposition of orphans be left to them, according to the laws and usages of the city.²⁹ In 1581 the aldermen, being incorrectly informed that the Duchess of Somerset wished to be relieved of the care of her husband's niece, a ward of the city, requested that the child be sent to them at the next meeting of their court at the Guildhall. As the duchess declared that the statement was untrue and that she desired to keep the girl with her, she was permitted to do so.³⁰ The mayor and the aldermen were also empowered to send for the guardians of the city's wards, to question them regarding their treatment of the children.³¹

²⁵Norton, in *Collier's Reprints*, III, 40; Coke, *Fourth Institute*, 249.

²⁶Stow (ed. 1633), 687.

²⁷Remem., 313.

²⁸*Lex Londini*, 55; *Laws and Customs of London*, 44.

²⁹Remem., 307.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 309.

³¹*Ibid.*, 310.

Sometimes, after her marriage, an orphan had considerable difficulty in obtaining her inheritance which had been controlled by the city during her minority. In 1579 John Mellers requested the privy council to write to the Lord Mayor in his favor for the payment of certain sums of money, rent, etc., due him in the right of his wife, an orphan of the city.³²

The second husband of a widow having charge of her children's estates was required to enter recognizances that he would pay the legacy to the chamberlain of the city. In 1598 one Michael Aspley married the widow of William Simpson and was required to enter such a recognizance. As he was a stranger in London, he could not procure citizens to become his bond and had not enough ready money to discharge the legacies. He, therefore, urged the council to intercede for him with the mayor, especially as he intended to bring up the children at his own expense.³³

Any attempt to marry a ward of the city without permission from the guardians was summarily punished by the mayor and aldermen. In 1575 the privy council directed the mayor to examine into a complaint against one Thomas Eaton, who had compelled an orphan of the city to marry him. He was directed to punish the offender according to the laws of the city, after which, if he considered the city laws insufficient for so great a crime, he could appeal to council, which would be glad to aid him in the Court of Star Chamber.³⁴ Public penance at Paul's Cross was required of another man who had stolen an orphan of the city and married her at Leicester.³⁵ In 1579 the queen appealed to the mayor in behalf of George Bargeman, who had unwittingly broken one of the city laws by marrying an orphan without license.³⁶

Another conspicuous function of the court of aldermen was its connection with the companies of the city. Cases of continu-

³²C. S. P., 1547-1580, 631.

³³A. P. C., 1598-1599, 480.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 1574-1575, 358.

³⁵Hist. MSS. Com. Repr., Salisbury Papers, II, 117.

³⁶C. S. P., 1547-1580, 642.

ous dispute between companies were sometimes referred by the mayor to it for consideration. In 1580 the Earl of Leicester wrote to the mayor urging that a certain Humphrey Nichols might be permitted to make bread according to his accustomed method until the dispute between the white and brown bakers should be settled. The mayor replied that he had referred the matter to certain aldermen, as the court was not meeting at that time it would be impossible to acquaint that body with the earl's request.³⁷ In 1582, in order that the dispute between the journeymen printers and the company of stationers might be settled, the printers petitioned the privy council to send a commission to the Lord Mayor and aldermen to hear and determine the controversy.³⁸ When the company of pewterers dismissed one of their masters he applied to the lords of the council in order to be reinstated. The privy council accordingly urged the court of aldermen to take such steps as would lead up to the restoration of his position.³⁹

The influence which the court of aldermen exercised in questions of disfranchisement was important. For a man to be admitted to the freedom of the city by service it was necessary that he should have served a freeman of London for at least seven years as apprentice. In 1580 Leicester wrote to the Lord Mayor and aldermen in behalf of one James Fowler, who, though he had served his master, a carpenter, as apprentice for seven or eight years, had been refused admittance to the city because his master had not taken up his freedom until the last two years of his service. He requested that the poor man might be permitted to take up his freedom in spite of that fact.⁴⁰ It was probably some similar error on the part of the master that caused the aldermen to deprive one William Weeks of his franchise. Lady Dorothy Stafford, writing to the Lord Mayor and aldermen in his behalf, requested that, as the fault had been committed by the master, who had made him free, he was the

³⁷Remem., 33.

³⁸C. S. P., 1581-1590, 87.

³⁹Remem., 93.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 149.

one to be punished, while the poor man should have his freedom restored to him. The day following the mayor, in reply, stated that Weeks had not reported the case truthfully to her; yet, because of her suit, the court of aldermen had agreed to restore him to the freedom of the city.⁴¹

Persons who desired to be admitted to the freedom of the city seem to have made a habit of appealing to noblemen of rank and members of the privy council to urge their suit with the court of aldermen. Many letters are calendared in the *Remembraucia* in which the mayor and aldermen are requested to admit certain people. Of the ten letters given for the years 1579-1580, six requests were refused, the answers of three are unrecorded, while one only was granted.⁴² That was a letter from the Master of the Rolls requesting that two young men might be admitted to the freedom of the waxchandler's company. In 1580 Peter Osborn wrote to the mayor and aldermen requesting that his servant be admitted by patrimony, as his father, Thomas Nichols, was presented in Cook's Hall, and so enrolled in the chamber of London, and as he had also married Widow Green, a grocer.

The court of aldermen also passed acts to aid in the maintenance of prices of food determined upon by the mayor. In 1549 the court ordained that a certain number of commoners should be appointed to perambulate the fish markets weekly, to see that a just amount of fish be given to the people for their money.⁴³ In 1552 the king's council appeared in the Guildhall, where were assembled the mayor, aldermen and wardens of the companies. They declared to the Londoners that the prices of food were too high in the city; that when prices fell over all the realm, in London they remained stationary. The blame was laid to the mayor and aldermen, who were ordered to repair the matter instantly.⁴⁴

Because of the heavy frosts of the winter of 1542 and 1543,

⁴¹Remem., 146.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 146, 147, 148.

⁴³Wrietbesley, II, 23.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 70.

fish was particularly dear, and because of the mortality among the cattle, meat was very scarce, the court of aldermen, therefore, regulated the feasts which were to be given at Easter. According to the action taken at that time, it was declared that the mayor should be served with but one course, consisting of seven dishes, at dinner and supper, and the aldermen and sheriffs with but six dishes. For every dish above the prescribed number the offender was to pay 40s.⁴⁵ It was further decreed that neither the mayor nor the aldermen should buy crane, swan or bustard for one year from the feast of Easter. In 1549 another feast of the mayor and aldermen was regulated by the court. In the new prayer book there was no especial service appointed for Wednesday in Whitsun week. It was, therefore, doubtful whether the day should be kept as a holiday or not. The court decided that there should be no sermon and that the feast, which had been regularly given by the mayor and sheriffs to the aldermen, should be postponed to Trinity Sunday.⁴⁶

One of the most important functions of the court of aldermen was the power it possessed with regard to appointments. This privilege was the source of many communications between the court and the privy council. The lords of the council were especially solicitous that those offices which yielded an income to the incumbent might be granted to persons of their choice. Among these desirable offices were many dealing with the commercial life of the city,—the gauger, the garbler, the collector of scavage, the collector of package, the alnager and the measurer of linens and woollens and the measurer of sea coal and salt.

In 1581 there was an attempt on the part of the Lord Chancellor to supersede the court in the appointment of the gauger. His action brought forth a letter from the mayor declaring the disposition of the office to be wholly in the hands of the city.⁴⁷ The lords of the council somewhat later requested

⁴⁵Wriothesley, II, 141.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁷Remem., 274.

the mayor to command the city gauger to refrain from measuring any sacks until such time as the president of the Spanish merchants could certify to him that her majesty's purveyors had made choice thereof. As there had been a dispute between the gauger's deputies and the Spanish merchants, it was requested that the court of aldermen should inquire into the matter and take steps that would prevent the same action in the future.⁴⁸ Towards the close of the sixteenth century the privy council urged the mayor to give John Cottesford the office of gauger, which had been taken from him by his predecessor in the chair.⁴⁹

Between 1581 and 1584 there was much discussion regarding the right of the court to appoint a garbler for the city. Before this time, in 1570, Lawrence Cookson, garbler of the city, petitioned Cecil to aid him in the execution of his duties, as some of the officers of the city placed obstructions in his way in carrying out the work of his office. He claimed that he held the office by legal conveyance from Anthony White. On Lady Day a lease for twenty-one years was granted to Blase Saunders. The office must have been particularly desirable, for at the death of Saunders, in 1581, there were three petitioners for the position—the queen, Burghley and Sir Francis Walsingham.⁵⁰ Burghley requested that no action be taken in the matter of appointing anyone to the office until the court had time to hear from him again, as it was his intention to be a suitor for a friend of his.⁵¹ The day after Burghley's letter was received two letters were sent to the mayor from Sir Francis Walsingham in behalf of his cousin, the widow of Blase Saunders. He asked that she be allowed to continue the execution of the office, as the lease which had been granted to her husband was unexpired.⁵² If the court of aldermen were still determined to deprive her of the office, he requested that he might be heard

⁴⁸Remem., 278.

⁴⁹A. P. C., 1596-1597, 334, 409.

⁵⁰Remem., 273.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 272.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 273.

in defense of her title. Three days later Elizabeth, under her signet, sent word to the Lord Mayor asking that a lease similar to that granted to Blase Saunders be given to George Southwack, merchant tailor.⁵³ Slightly over a month later the privy council wrote to the mayor urging that the recommendation of the queen be carried out. The aldermen, declaring that such a grant would be prejudicial to their charter, refused to grant it. While the contest thus begun between the aldermen and the privy council was carried on during the winter and spring of the next year, Burghley must have withdrawn his suit, for in May, 1582, he talked to Fleetwood, urging him to use his influence in getting the court of aldermen to appoint Mr. Southwack as garbler.⁵⁴ When Fleetwood wrote to Burghley he said that in speaking with the aldermen he had ascertained that but three were against the appointment of Mr. Southwack. At the presentation of the mayor the next day he suggested it would be a good time for Burghley to talk to the mayor. To the letter is added, by Fleetwood: "I touched somewhat the garbler's office. My Lord Mayor telleth me that he is very willing to help Mr. Southwicke. But now I find that Mr. Daniel Duchett, Mr. Pipe and Mr. Martin are the only letts. I have not spared to tell them my mind this day, although I have only angered them, yet I see they be coming over."⁵⁵

That his expectations were not realized is seen from the fact that the city records testify that on February 26, 1583, Thomas Saunders, grocer, was sworn garbler. About eight months later the widow of Thomas Saunders obtained the sanction of the court of aldermen to set over the remainder of the unexpired lease to George Southwack, who was sworn into office October 26, 1584.⁵⁶

The office of collector of scavage seems to have been almost as desirable as that of garbler. In 1594 the lords of the council wrote to the Lord Mayor and aldermen requesting them to

⁵³Remem., 275.

⁵⁴Wright, *l. c.*, II, 173.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 174.

⁵⁶Remem., 273.

admit John de Cardwas to this office. They added that the reversion of the office had been granted to them some time previous. On the same day Sir T. Heneage requested the grant of the reversion of the office for one of his servants.⁵⁷

When the office of collector of package became vacant in 1580, the court of aldermen was petitioned by Christopher Hatton for the reversion of the office for a servant of his.⁵⁸ The mayor answered that the appointment could not be made. A few months later the office in reversion after the death of Richard Young was granted to Robert Woodruffe, the son of the mayor, Nicholas Woodruffe.⁵⁹ It was stated that Sir John Spencer had an old grudge against Nicholas Woodruffe, so, when he was elected to the mayoralty in 1594, he attempted to deprive Robert Woodruffe of his office, although the court of aldermen was opposed to the action. Richard Carmarden asked Sir Robert Cecil to intercede for the young man with the queen, as the person that the mayor contemplated appointing could not fill the office so well as Woodruffe. The latter had determined to serve the office himself instead of appointing a deputy.⁶⁰

The question of the right to appoint the measurer of linen, cloth, canvas and velvet caused considerable strife in the early part of the sixteenth century. In July, 1535 a sign manual was sent to the chancellor and secretary, requiring them to settle the controversy between the king and the city regarding the gift of common meter of silk and linen cloth.⁶¹ Writs of injunction were to be issued until the king's title should be disproved. A year later Henry VIII ordered the mayor to restore William Blackendale to the office of metership of cloth, which had recently been taken from him. He further directed that not only should he be restored immediately to the full possession of the office, but all the profits which had been collected during the time that he was deprived of the office be given to him.⁶² In

⁵⁷Remem., 284.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 270.

⁵⁹C. S. P., 1547-1580, 9.

⁶⁰Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, V, 40.

⁶¹L. F. & D., H. VIII, 8, 1026.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 10, 894; Ellis' *Letters*, Second Series, II, 90.

1541 the king granted a patent for the metership of cloth of gold, velvet, silks and linen cloth to one of the clerks of the signet. The king's appointee brought with him an injunction, which he served in the court of aldermen, declaring that whoever would not suffer him to exercise the metership should be fined 2,000m. The chronicler adds, "This was against the charter of the city, for the mayor had the gift always."⁶³ This intrusion of the king set a precedent that brought the matter into conflict later. In 1580 Elizabeth granted a patent to Edward Stafford granting to him the penalties incurred by the clothmakers of England and Wales.⁶⁴ About a year from that time Stafford received a letter from the city regarding his patent. The court of aldermen had considered the matter and had declared that, according to statutes passed during Philip and Mary's reign, as well as in Elizabeth's reign,⁶⁵ the search, survey and benefit of forfeitures had been vested in such persons as the mayor and aldermen had appointed. Moreover, the queen had granted to the city a charter assigning to the mayor, commonalty and citizens the searching, measuring, weighing and sealing all kinds of cloth. That this did not end the contention is shown by a letter received by the mayor from Burghley in 1582. This letter gave a list of the offices in the nomination of the city, in which that of the metership is not included.⁶⁶

The gift of the office of alnager was considered equally valuable to the city. In 1580 Peter Osborne requested that his servant, Robert Nichols, might be appointed to that office, as Mr. Parker, who held it at that time, desired to surrender it.⁶⁷ From three letters sent by Sir Christopher Hatton in the year following, it appears that Nichols did not give good service in the position. In the letter sent on August 8 it was declared that the queen regarded the great abuses in cloth throughout the realm to be due to the searchers and alnagers, and she urged the court of

⁶³Wriothesley, I, 129.

⁶⁴Remem., 68.

⁶⁵St. of the Realm, 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, 5; 14 Elizabeth, 10.

⁶⁶Remem., 118.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 271.

aldermen in choosing these men to be careful that they selected skillful and experienced persons. It was recommended that at the next meeting of the court Mr. Parker should be readmitted to the position.⁶⁸ Again, on August 20 and September 4, Hatton urged the appointment of Parker. On September 15 the mayor answered that Parker had been granted the office, then had requested to regrant it to a young man who had paid him £160 for the place. It was agreed that he should be replaced if he paid back the purchase money.⁶⁹ In 1582 the council recommended Francis Langley, who had long since received from them the grant in reversion of alnager, for the office. On December 9 Sir Francis Walsingham sent a letter requesting the appointment of the same man.⁷⁰ Four years later Walsingham was again a supplicant to the mayor and aldermen for the office of alnager, requesting the position for one John Edon.⁷¹

In case an alnager failed in his duty or was guilty of any misdemeanor, he was called before the court of aldermen and was required to answer for his actions. In 1581 the mayor displaced Edon from his position because he was known to have brought up his children beyond the seas in the Roman Catholic religion.⁷²

The aldermen appointed men to the offices of meters of sea coal and sea salt. The ancient usage and custom of the city consisted in taking a sample of the coal from every vessel coming to London, either from above or below the bridge, and an account of the bulk, after which a bill of discharge was given. For the measuring there was a charge of 2d. a quarter, and for placing the coal in sacks the measurer charged an obabus a quarter.⁷³ In 1558 there were four coal meters in London,⁷⁴ but the number increased, so that in 1582 George Southwack

⁶⁸Remem., 69.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 272.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 277.

⁷¹C. S. P., 1581-1590, 311.

⁷²Remem., 68.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 375.

⁷⁴A. P. C., 1558-1560, 45.

found the income so small that he declared to Walsingham that it was scarcely sufficient to maintain those who exercised the duty. Walsingham then requested that a decree should be passed by the city that no more should be admitted until, by death or otherwise, the number should be reduced to four.⁷⁵

The positions, however, must have yielded a good return to the holders, for not only were prominent persons of the court suitors in the interests of different persons, but the queen herself, under signet, wrote to the Lord Mayor in 1571, recommending Robert Pamphyn, a servitor in her wardrobe of robes, to the next vacancy in the office of measurer of coals.⁷⁶ And again, in 1578, the lords of the council wrote to the Lord Mayor to admit John Hubbard to the freedom of the city and to grant him the office of salt meter or coal meter.⁷⁷ The request that all excuses which might tend to his hindrance be set aside could not have met with favor, because, in 1580, the privy council solicited, by command of the queen, the grant of salt or coal meter for John Hubbard.⁷⁸ Two years later another letter was sent to the mayor and aldermen, reminding them of the fact that they had not complied with the queen's request in behalf of the same man, and directing them to grant him the office at the next vacancy.⁷⁹ In 1591, when the privy council was again urging the mayor to grant a reversion of the office of metership of coal, the mayor responded that he could not comply with the request, as there was no vacancy and he could not bind his successor to confirm the appointment.⁸⁰ Sir John Spencer, mayor in 1594, sold the office of coal meter to one Yardley, contrary to the laws of the city. The next year Yardley died, leaving his wife and children almost destitute on account of the great sums that he had paid for the office.⁸¹

In order to facilitate shipping on the Thames, a number of

⁷⁵Remem., 275.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 279, 280.

⁷⁷A. P. C., 1577-1578, 429.

⁷⁸Remem., 270.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 275.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 283.

⁸¹A. P. C., 1595-1596, 103.

water bailiffs were appointed by the city. By charter, the mayor had full authority over that part of the river which was near the city, being called the "Conservator of the Thames," but because of his various duties these substitutes were appointed to punish all encroachments on the river, to look after the fishermen in order to preserve the small fry and to prevent their destruction by unlawful nets.⁸² For this purpose juries were appointed for the counties of Middlesex, Essex, Kent and Surrey, bordering on the Thames, and were summoned to make their presentments when the water bailiff wished to make inquiry of all offenses relative to the river.⁸³

In 1580 Elizabeth, through Sir Francis Walsingham, made a request that the court of aldermen grant this office to one of her choice. In answer to this letter the mayor informed Walsingham that the election had been postponed, but, because the office was of considerable importance on account of the management of the river and service of the market, and because the reversion had already been granted, the court of aldermen besought him to speak to the queen, as they could not, without prejudice to the city, choose the one the queen wished in the place.⁸⁴ To this letter the queen replied that she consented to the appointment of the person having the reversionary grant.⁸⁵

When the office of water bailiff became vacant in 1592 it was immediately filled, although John Dowell had been granted the reversion of it five years before this time. Though the privy council commanded the mayor and aldermen to give the office to him, according to his grant, they refused to yield, offering the man 100m. for the repair of his credit.⁸⁶ Dowell declared that the office was worth £100 a year, but rather than hold it with the dislike of the court of aldermen he agreed to accept the 100m. and relinquish all claim to the position. The privy council urged the mayor and aldermen to increase the 100m. to

⁸²Stow (ed. 1633), 18; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 520.

⁸³*Laws and Customs*, 461.

⁸⁴Remem., 10.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*

⁸⁶A. P. C., 1591-1592, 269.

£100 to be bestowed on the man, on account of the temperate course he held towards the city officials.⁸⁷

The court of aldermen had the appointment of certain persons who aided the mayor in his efforts to preserve the public health. When any article of food seemed impure, the court of aldermen appointed a number of men as searchers of it for the city. In 1551 thirty-one sacks of tainted hops were burned in Finsbury Fields by order of the court of aldermen.⁸⁸ The same court appointed six commissioners to be searchers of hops during the remainder of the year.

In connection with the judicial affairs of the city, there were several places in the gift of the court of aldermen. One of the most important of these was the common sergeant, who attended the mayor and aldermen on court days and gave them counsel on all matters of moment.⁸⁹ That the common council, too, seemed to have a voice in the appointment is evident from some communications received from Elizabeth and her advisers regarding the office. The position had been held for a number of years by Bernard Randolph.⁹⁰ In January, 1582, the queen directed that a letter be sent to the mayor, aldermen and commonalty of London declaring Randolph, on account of his age and infirmity, to be unfit to fulfil his duties. Because of her great regard for the reputation of the city she recommended Dr. Julius Cæsar as deputy for the office. She suggested that some of the profits of the office might still go to Randolph. Some time after this Leicester requested that the reversion of the office be granted to his servant, Richard Sutton.⁹¹ He stated that the mayor and aldermen had already granted their sanction to his request, so his suit was that the common council would confirm the grant. It is evident that the city did not yield to the earl's request, for shortly after another letter came from Walsingham, reminding the mayor and aldermen of the queen's request in

⁸⁷A. P. C., 1591-1592, 521.

⁸⁸Wriothesley, II. 55.

⁸⁹*Laws and Customs of London*, 44.

⁹⁰Remem., 278.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 277.

favor of Dr. Cæsar.⁹² He further asked that such a yearly fee and pension should be granted as should be seemly for one of his degree. But neither to the queen's choice nor to that of Leicester was the position granted, for the city records show that Thomas Kirton was admitted common sergeant in place of Randolph, deceased, August 15, 1583.⁹³

Almost as valuable as the office of common sergeant were the secondaryships of the counters. Each of these two men had charge of the writs in the sheriffs' court, and had control of one or the other of the sheriffs' prisons.⁹⁴ Wolsey, in 1527, asked Henry Dackers to resign the reversionary interest he had obtained from the mayor and aldermen for his son Robert.⁹⁵ In 1580 Sir William Condeall sent a letter to the mayor and aldermen requesting a grant in reversion of one of the offices of secondary for his servant, Jasper Warren. The Lord Chancellor, in 1583, wrote to the mayor and aldermen thanking them for the reversionary grant made by them to George Filton, and urging them to admit him to the next place that should be vacant.⁹⁶ After this five other letters were sent to the mayor and aldermen demanding that George Filton be admitted to the office immediately.⁹⁷ For some time there was a contest between him and Andrew Mallory for the place, but after the question as to which should be appointed had been much discussed the mayor issued a declaration in favor of Filton, as "Mallory was of evil fame in the city and unsuited for such an important office."⁹⁸ The appointment of secondary again led to much discussion in 1593-1594. A Mr. Moulton had been admitted to the counter of Wood Street by the consent of the court of aldermen through the intervention of the queen. In spite of this, the sheriff in charge of this prison had admitted another

⁹²Remem., 279.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 278n.

⁹⁴*Laws and Customs of London*, 171.

⁹⁵L. F. & D., H. VIII, 4, Appendix, 133.

⁹⁶Remem., 270, 281.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 281, 282.

⁹⁸C. S. P., 1581-1590, 187.

person to the office.⁹⁹ A month later Sir Robert Cecil sent another letter to the aldermen, declaring that her majesty required them to confirm the grant which she had so often recommended.¹⁰⁰

That the duties appertaining to the office of secondary might be well performed, the incumbent was expected to give bonds showing his good intention.¹⁰¹ In 1592 the court of aldermen, though opposed to Robert White, was required to admit him to the office, as he had received the reversion some years back. The aldermen, therefore, in order to deprive him of the benefits accruing from the position, imposed new bonds each year on him, which were to be paid to one of the sheriffs. These amounted to such large sums that it was almost impossible for the man to pay them. The privy council wrote to the mayor requesting that these bonds be withdrawn and but one bond be required of him which would cover the entire period of his service.¹⁰²

There were a number of less important offices that were likewise granted by the court of aldermen. In 1579 the privy council wrote to the court of aldermen that as John Sturgeon had received the reversion of the office of clerk of the chamberlain's court in 1565, by the mayor and alderman at that time, they were required to admit him at once.¹⁰³

Again, in 1589, the privy council wrote to the mayor, aldermen and sheriffs regarding one Ralph Knighton, who had received the reversion of the office of beadleship in the Court of Conscience about thirteen years previous, to succeed at the death of William Baker, who then held the office. But, when the place was vacant, it had been granted to one Hills by unlawful means. It was requested that Knighton be given his just dues by appointing him to the office.¹⁰⁴

The reversion of the office of common clerk, too, was fre-

⁹⁹Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, IV, 386.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 414.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*

¹⁰²A. P. C., 1592-1593, 115.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 1578-1580, 316.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 1588-1589, 122.

quently granted by the court of aldermen.¹⁰⁵ This officer, who attended the mayor and aldermen on court days, kept the original charters of the city, the books, rolls and other records wherein were registered the acts and proceedings of the city.¹⁰⁶ Occasionally he read the proclamations sent to the city. The sentence of Mary, Queen of Scots, was read by the town clerk at four places in the city, at the Cross in Chepe, Chancery Lane, Leadenhall and St. Magnus' Church.¹⁰⁷

The positions of city wait,¹⁰⁸ common hunt,¹⁰⁹ master fuller in Blackwell Hall,¹¹⁰ master of the bridge house,¹¹¹ provost marshal of Southwark,¹¹² swordbearer¹¹³ and masters of the court of requests¹¹⁴ were also filled by the court of aldermen.

The constant interference of the crown officials in the appointment of persons for city positions would seem on its face to be dangerous to the privileges of the Londoners. That the citizens of London felt this, appears from a letter sent from the mayor and aldermen to Henry VIII in answer to communications sent by the king. In these letters Henry had stated that there had been composition between the city and certain officers of the crown regarding the appointment of officers of the city. The mayor replied that there had been no composition, that it was simply owing to the fact that there had been intercession on the part of the crown officials for certain men, that the court had yielded to their choice.¹¹⁵ The city regarded its action as a concession which in no way should be taken as a precedent. Then, too, the frequent refusal of the city to sanction the choice of the crown officers shows that they regarded

¹⁰⁵Remem., 31.

¹⁰⁶*Laws and Customs of London*, 44.

¹⁰⁷Nichols, *Progresses of Q. Elizabeth*, II, 497.

¹⁰⁸Remem., 275.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 274.

¹¹⁰A. P. C., 1578-1580, 30.

¹¹¹C. S. P., 1540, 783.

¹¹²A. P. C., 1596-1597, 352.

¹¹³L. F. & D., II. VIII, 12, II, 15.

¹¹⁴Stow (ed. 1633), 769.

¹¹⁵L. F. & D., II. VIII, 9, 28.

their right of appointment as a privilege which should not be violated.

The officers appointed by the court were answerable to the mayor and aldermen. In 1550 the Lord Mayor, by the assent of the court of aldermen, sent the keeper of the counter in Bread Street, on account of his cruelty to the prisoners, to the jail of Newgate, where he was placed in irons. At the expiration of three days he was released of his irons, because of the suit of the court of aldermen, but he was required to remain in prison two days longer. He was then taken before the court of aldermen, where he was bound in recognizance in 100m. to observe the act of common council for the ordering of prisoners.¹¹⁶ In a suit brought against a constable, in 1580, the court of aldermen decided that the man had done no wrong, but had simply fulfilled his duty.¹¹⁷

CHAPTER VII.

COURTS OF JUDICATURE OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

For judicial purposes there were several courts held by the mayor, the recorder and those aldermen who had previously served as mayors. The most important of these were the court of hustings, the Lord Mayor's court and the court of requests or conscience. They were all held in the Guildhall, where each court had its own specified place and day of meeting.¹ The oldest and most important of them was the hustings court, which was held by right of charter granted to the city by Henry I.² This privilege of holding the court was confirmed by John in

¹¹⁶Wriothsley, II, 42.

¹¹⁷Remem., 265.

¹Wriothsley, II, 108.

²Hist. Charters, 3.

1199³ and Henry III in 1268. According to Henry I's charter, the court was to meet once a week, on Monday. Henry III declared that, though the court ought to be held but one day in the week, if any work were left unfinished the court might be continued the next morning.⁴ From that time on it had come to meet twice a week, on Monday and Tuesday. The place of hust-ing was evidently some distance back from the council chamber, for when Mary, in 1554, came to speak to the Londoners regarding Wyatt's rebellion, she passed through the council chamber, then went up to the mayor's court and then came down to the place of husting,⁵ where the commons were assembled. Moreover, in the election of mayor the first step was taken in the place of the hustings, where the common council and the livery-men of the companies were assembled, after which the aldermen and recorder retired to the council chamber.⁶ The court was held before the mayor and sheriffs, with the recorder acting as judge. It was here that all cases of pleas of land and common pleas were tried, and judgment of outlawry was given and deeds enrolled, wills registered and writs of error proved.⁷

The crown officials insisted that the court should be held regularly. In 1582 the mayor was amerced £1,000 by the court of common pleas for neglecting to hold the hustings. His excuse was that he had been ill with a disease resembling the plague, and it had been decided that his attendance at the court would be with great risk of life. The aldermen advised him to confer with the recorder, who was able to give proofs of a similar loss of hustings due to the sickness of the mayor. He was further advised to repair to the court, taking with him letters and proofs of previous failures to hold the hustings, in order that he might secure his discharge.⁸ That another loss of

³Hist. Charters, 11.

⁴*Ibid.*, 40.

⁵Wriothesley, II, 108.

⁶Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 117; Stow (ed. 1632), 652.

⁷Coke, *Fourth Institute*, 247; *Lex Londini*, 100; Calthorpe, *Rept. of Special Cases touching Customs and Liberties*, 84.

⁸Remem., 207.

the court might be avoided, the court of common council, about a year and a half later, passed an act providing for the court in case of the absence of the mayor from sickness or other urgent occasion. In such cases any alderman who had previously acted as mayor might hold the court with the assistance of the recorder and one or both the sheriffs.⁹

The mayor's court was held on Tuesday before the mayor and aldermen, with the recorder acting as judge. It had cognizance of all cases arising within the city of which the Londoners were parties.¹⁰ All suits between Londoners, all questions of debt which had been appealed from the sheriff's court, all matters of assize and the questioning of all persons suspected of writing incendiary literature, were tried in this court.

Owing to the frequent change in the principal officer of the city, it sometimes happened that judgments which were given in the mayoralty of one man were executed in that of another. In 1576 it seemed as if the mayor lacked zeal in carrying out the decisions which had been rendered by the court during the time of service of his predecessor. According to a judgment which had been given in a suit between two Londoners, one man was required to pay £80 to the other. The privy council had been informed that the execution of the judgment had been hindered by the present mayor. Consequently, the lords commanded him either to hasten the execution or to report to them the reason for the delay.¹¹ It was probably to prevent the delay which would necessarily follow the installation of the new mayor and the possibility of the new mayor's being more hostile to the privy council than the present incumbent that the lords of the council, in 1586, almost at the expiration of the current term of service, urged the mayor to "use some speade" in bringing to an end a contention between certain Londoners.¹²

There was considerable work attached to the mayor's court

⁹Act of common council, in Sharpe *Calendar of Wills*, XI.

¹⁰Coke, *Fourth Institute*, 247†; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept. III, Appendix I, 212.

¹¹A. P. C., 1575-1577, 250.

¹²*Ibid.*, 1589-1590, 179.

with regard to pleas of debt. These cases might be appealed from the sheriffs' court to that of the mayor, when the decision might be altered.¹³

In a letter which Fleetwood sent to Burghley in 1581 he stated that, if the defendant requested it, cases were carried to the mayor's court in spite of opposition of the plaintiff. He added that it was advisable to have suits in this higher court, for there was twice as much expedition there than in the sheriffs' court.¹⁴

When a suit that was being heard was between citizens of London judgment was given in the presence of both parties.¹⁵ If, however, a citizen of another town had a complaint against a Londoner, the mayor summoned the defendant before him in order to hear his defence. It will be remembered that by charter the citizens of London were not required to plead outside the walls of the city. In 1582 the mayor and jurats of the Cinque Ports informed the Lord Mayor that one Hall, a fishmonger of London, was £4 3s. 1d. in debt to Abraham Snode, of Feversham. They requested the mayor to summon Hall before him to examine into the matter and to compel Hall to pay the costs as well as the just debt.¹⁶

The privy council's hand is seen in trial of cases for debt, just as it is in other matters connected with the city. In 1550 a letter was sent to the mayor and four aldermen to end a controversy which had existed between Thomas and John Barne and their debtors.¹⁷ In 1552 the mayor was directed to consider a complaint against John Vandernoit, physician, and to do what he could to remedy his distress.¹⁸ A letter of complaint against a London citizen was sent to the mayor in 1554. It was stated that, according to rumor, John Lewis was feigning bankruptcy in order to avoid paying for certain goods. The

¹³Coke, *l. c.*, 247f.

¹⁴Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, I. 221.

¹⁵Remem., 491.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 489.

¹⁷A. P. C., 1580-1582, 51.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 1552-1554, 50.

mayor was directed to ascertain whether this were true or not by searching out Lewis in his own home. If it were found to be true that Lewis was unable to pay, then the goods were to be delivered unto the persons from whom they had been purchased.¹⁹

In addition to directing that certain trials be held, the privy council sometimes urged the delay in proceedings of other cases. In 1551 the mayor was requested to delay giving judgment in a certain suit, and was directed to command one of the principals to appear before the council.²⁰ In the same year the mayor was asked to stay a process between Combes and Spinola until the next year. It was declared that as Combes was to be sent on a mission outside of the realm, he would not be able to be present at the trial until that time.²¹

By a writ of *certiorari* cases which had been judged in the mayor's court might be re-examined by the justices of common pleas. In 1529 certain justices were granted commissions authorizing them to examine, in the presence of the mayor and aldermen, at the Guildhall, a judgment given in a suit before the said mayor and aldermen concerning a debt of 100m.²² There was a similar case in 1592, when a commission of error was granted to the Lord Chief Justice and to two justices of common pleas to determine an action depending before the Lord Mayor of London.²³

After a case had been decided in the court, the privy council sometimes directed the mayor to attempt to bring about some agreement between the debtors and creditors. In 1574 the lords wrote to the mayor in behalf of a Scotchman imprisoned in one of the counters. It was thought that the mayor by meeting with his creditor might bring about some composition whereby the man's imprisonment might be lessened.²⁴ Again, in 1580,

¹⁹A. P. C., 1554-1556, 344.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 1550-1552, 235.

²¹*Ibid.*, 384.

²²L. F. & D. H. VIII, 4, 5748 (18).

²³C. S. P., 1591-1594, 178.

²⁴A. P. C., 1571-1575, 310.

when William Parker was in debt for a sum not exceeding £16, the privy council urged the mayor to call his creditors before him and to treat with them in their lordship's names in order that he might obtain an agreement by which the man could still retain some of his property.²⁵ In 1581 the mayor, recorder, sheriffs and Bishop of London were appointed as commissioners to compound with the creditors of the poor debtors imprisoned in Newgate, Ludgate and the two Counters.²⁶ In 1586 the council requested the mayor to persuade the creditors of Michael Story to give him one year's day of payment. If they would not agree to this he was required to cause them to certify the reason for their refusal,²⁷ and to forbear to trouble the debtor with imprisonment until they should have received an answer to their communication. A letter of like content was requested of the council in 1589. The debtor asked the lords of the council to write to the mayor and sheriffs that the time already allowed him by their lordship's former letters might be extended six months longer.²⁸ In 1596 the mayor sent word to Sir Robert Cecil that he had done what he could for the debtor in whose behalf he had written.²⁹

According to the law of London the personal effects of a debtor unable to meet his obligations were seized by the creditor. In 1531, at the death of Thomas Mullins, his creditors detained the clothes belonging to him by judgment given in the Lord Mayor's court.³⁰ In 1580 the privy council informed the mayor that property of Richard Brackenburg had been attached for debt by Samuel Knolles and had been offered for sale, although no lawful demand had been made for the debt. The mayor was, therefore, directed to call the creditors before him for the purpose of ascertaining what had become of the goods.³¹ If the

²⁵A. P. C., 1580-1581, 247.

²⁶C. S. P., 1581-1590, 8.

²⁷A. P. C., 1586-1587, 205.

²⁸C. S. P., 1581-1590, 584.

²⁹Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VI, 187.

³⁰L. F. & D., II. VIII, 5, 674.

³¹Remem., 484.

creditors refused to inform him he was authorized to imprison them without bail.

A large part of the time was consumed in the trial of persons suspected of breaking the assize. A person found guilty of making bread smaller than the size prescribed by the mayor was condemned to sit in the pillory.³² Sometimes the condemned had to bear the article of false weight or measurement about his neck while he sat on the pillory. A purveyor who had been declared fraudulent in his dealings was required to wear a string of smelts around his neck. The court had adjudged that the remainder of his punishment would be mutilation of the ears, but, on account of the mayor's intercession, he was confined to one of the prisons of London for a long period.³³

The court had control of persons who were guilty of uttering seditious words and of publishing incendiary literature.³⁴ In 1595 the mayor sent to the Counter a person who had uttered contemptuous words against the authority of the Star Chamber.³⁵ The punishment of the authors of seditious books was frequently severe. In 1568 the mayor committed to one of the Counters a man who had caused an unlicensed book to be printed.³⁶ In order to prevent the circulation of a book bearing the title "A Discovery of the Gaping Gulf," in which the author had spoken disrespectfully of the queen and the Duke of Anjou, the council in 1579 commanded the mayor to summon before him the masters and wardens of the companies. After they had received the directions of the mayor, the masters and wardens of each company called a meeting of their company and read the queen's proclamation concerning the book. Each person having a copy of the book was directed to bring it immediately to the company, so that it might be delivered to the mayor. All persons possessing copies were required to give the names of the persons from whom they had obtained them.³⁷

³²Wriothesley, II. 35, 71.

³³Hayward, *l. c.*, 29.

³⁴C. S. P., 1547-1580, 417.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 1595-1597, 63.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 1547-1580, 320.

³⁷Remem., 29.

When unlicensed books or those containing matter of state were printed the mayor imprisoned the printer as well as the author.³⁸

Persons who refused to abide by the decisions of the court were further punished by the mayor. In 1589, when the privy council urged the mayor to hasten to give judgment in a certain suit, it was added, "If either of the parties refuse to stand to such order as you shall so set down, then you are to proceed further with them, or either of them, for their contempt as you shall think meet."³⁹ In 1577 the mayor was directed by the council to release a person whom he had imprisoned because of his refusal to carry out the decisions of the court, on condition that he gave bonds not to disturb the possessions of the complainant.⁴⁰

The court sometimes acted in conjunction with the national courts. In 1551 the mayor was directed by the privy council to take sureties of £500 from Sir Thomas Newnham to appear before the Court of Star Chamber.⁴¹ In the same year the warden of the fleet was directed by the council to conduct the warden of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, whom he was holding as a prisoner, to the mayor of London. The mayor was then to bind him in £200 to appear before the council from day to day during the next term, and in the meantime not to return to his college.⁴² In 1552 one John Kell was bound before the mayor in recognizance of 1,000m. to appear before the lords of the council to answer a certain complaint made against him by one of the Earl of Pembroke's servants.⁴³

Besides taking recognizances for appearance before the lords of the council, the mayor's court sometimes carried out the sentences of the Court of Star Chamber. In 1580 the mayor was directed to release a person who had been judged by the Court of Star Chamber to stand upon the pillory and to be

³⁸Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, VI. 264; Wright, *l. c.*, II, 463.

³⁹A. P. C., 1589-1590, 179.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 1575-1577, 375.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 1550-1552, 316.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 317.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 457.

committed to Newgate for six months. At the expiration of three months the council agreed that his punishment might be remitted, provided he gave bonds for his good behavior to the mayor.⁴⁴

The court had no authority over officers of the crown. Even though these might be living in London, they were free from arrest and trial by the officials of London. In 1566 the privy council sent word to the mayor that, although officers at arms were free from arrest in London, they had been informed that certain officers had been arrested within the liberties of the city. These were ordered to be released, but any person having suit against them could be satisfied by appealing to the Lord Marshal's court.⁴⁵ In 1571 the queen directed the mayor to refrain from dealing in the courts in any suit appertaining to the admiralty court.⁴⁶ In 1584 Fleetwood wrote to Burghley that he was unable to proceed with a certain case because the persons who had created the disturbance were officers of the guard.⁴⁷ In 1595 the mayor wrote to Burghley that when he discovered that a certain man who had been imprisoned on account of disorderly behavior was a yeoman of the guard he released him. He urged that fitting punishment be administered to him by the council.⁴⁸

Growing out of the mayor's court was another court which was established in 1518 by the common council. In that year an act was passed authorizing the mayor and aldermen to appoint every month two aldermen and four discreet commoners as commissioners to hold a court twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday, in the Guildhall.⁴⁹ The body was to be known as the court of requests or court of conscience, and was to have cognizance of all cases of debt which did not exceed 40s.⁵⁰ In 1574 Leicester wrote to the mayor asking him to

⁴⁴Remem., 264.

⁴⁵C. S. P., Addenda, 1566-1579, 10.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 1547-1580.

⁴⁷Wright, *l. c.*, II, 242.

⁴⁸Remem., 451.

⁴⁹Stow (ed. 1633), 769.

⁵⁰Wright, II, 166.

intercede for one Philpot. Accordingly, the mayor, with six aldermen, wrote to the masters of the court of requests urging them to help the poor man and his tenants.⁵¹ That the creation of this court considerably lessened the work of the Lord Mayor's court, and that it was regarded as a boon by the officials of London, is evident from the extension of its powers that was made from time to time.⁵²

The mayor and those aldermen who had previously held the office of mayor were, by the grant of Edward IV, justices of the peace for the city of London.⁵³ This privilege was carefully guarded by the officials of London. At a time when it seemed as if the rights of the city in this respect might be infringed, the mayor, in a letter to Burghley, declared that the queen's ancestors had granted to the city those privileges by which the mayor, the recorder and those aldermen who had passed the chair were justices of the peace for the county of the city of London in as ample a manner as any other justice of the peace of the realm.⁵⁴

In case of riots or concerted risings on the part of the Londoners, the mayor and the aldermen went out to suppress the disorder. After the people were subdued the perpetrators of the disorder were usually, by the mayor's order, confined in one of the Counters.⁵⁵

The opposition of the citizens to the foreigners in London is seen by the frequent rising of the people against them. In addition to the rising on "Evil May Day,"⁵⁶ there were two other attacks on the French—one in 1525⁵⁷ and the other in 1586.⁵⁸ On the latter date the rising was against the Dutch as well as the French. In 1558 an assault was made upon the

⁵¹C. S. P., Addenda, 1566-1579, 473.

⁵²*Privilegia Londini*, 398.

⁵³Charter of Edward IV, in *Hist. Charters*, 80.

⁵⁴Remem., 43.

⁵⁵*Grey Friars' Chronicle*, 71; Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, V, 249; *ibid.*, XV Rept., Appendix V, 94.

⁵⁶Hall, 588; Grey Friars, 30.

⁵⁷Hall, 720.

⁵⁸Ellis Letters, First Series, II, 306.

house of the ambassador of the king of Swevia,⁵⁹ and in 1582 the Spanish ambassador⁶⁰ was attacked as he rode through the streets of the city. In each of these cases the instigators of the attacks were severely punished by the mayor and aldermen. The privy council directed the mayor to administer whatever punishment he should think advisable to the offenders against the Swedish ambassador in the presence of some delegate of the injured man.

The Lord Mayor, the recorder and those aldermen who had passed the chair were also justices of oyer and terminer. This had been granted to the citizens by charter of Edward IV.⁶¹ The mayor was usually appointed as chief of the commission, although one or more of the most prominent of the national judges were placed on the commission with him.⁶² In the trial of Thomas Culpepper, in 1541, the mayor presided, with the Lord Chancellor sitting at his right hand and the Duke of Norfolk at his left hand.⁶³

As justices of jail delivery, too, the mayor and aldermen acted in conjunction with prominent men of the time.⁶⁴ If the suspected person in a murder trial pleaded guilty, the jury was not summoned. One of the popular dramas of Elizabeth's reign contains a scene in which persons suspected of murdering a London citizen are tried before the mayor and aldermen. After the prisoner declares himself guilty, the Lord Justice speaks, "Mr. Sheriff, ye shall not need any jury to pass upon him, for he hath pleaded guilty and stands convicted before the bar."⁶⁵

Many cases of treason were brought for trial to the Guildhall. In the eighth year of Henry VIII, on May 4, the persons principally concerned with the uprising of May 1 against the French were arraigned at the oyer and terminer at Guildhall.⁶⁶ The charge was treason, because a truce had been made between

⁵⁹A. P. C., 1558-1560, 21.

⁶⁰Hist. MSS. Com. Rept., Salisbury Papers, II, 513.

⁶¹Historical Charters, 80.

⁶²Wriothesley, I, 131, 176, 177; II, 7, 12, 13, 106.

⁶³*Ibid.*, II, 106, 131.

⁶⁴L. F. & D., H. VIII, I, 1942.

⁶⁵*Warning for Fair Women*, Act, II, 315.

⁶⁶Hall, 589.

England and France. The trial of the Duke of Buckingham took place in the same hall.⁶⁷ In 1747 Henry Howard was arraigned before this court, with the Lord Mayor acting as chief.⁶⁸ In 1553, November 13, Archbishop Cranmer, Guilford Dudley, Lady Jane Gray, Ambrose and Harry Dudley were also arraigned here.⁶⁹ It was not until the next January that Robert Dudley was brought from the Tower to the Guildhall for trial.⁷⁰ In 1594 Dr. Lopez was tried for treason in the Guildhall before the Lord Mayor, the Earl of Essex and Lord Howard.⁷¹

When persons suspected of treason were tried in the Tower, the Lord Mayor, with the aldermen and certain men of the principal crafts was present. Thus, in 1536, at the arraignment of Anne Boleyn and Lord Rochefort, the Lord Mayor, aldermen and eight men of the twelve principal crafts sat in the council chamber.⁷²

This then represents the part played by the mayor and the aldermen in the judicial life of the city. It does not, however, represent the entire civil and criminal jurisdiction of London, for, in addition to the courts here enumerated, there were those tribunals which were held before the other officials—the sheriffs and the recorder—whose work was not considered in this study.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CITY AND THE COURT.

In examining the one hundred and eighteen years which constitute the entire period of the Tudor rule, for the purpose of ascertaining any change in the relations between the crown

⁶⁷L. F. & D., H. VIII, 3, 1284.

⁶⁸Grey Friars' Chronicle, 53; Wriothesley, I, 177.

⁶⁹*Chronicle Q. Jane and Q. Mary*, 34.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 35.

⁷¹C. S. P., 1591-1594, 448.

⁷²Grey Friars' Chronicle, 38; Wriothesley, 39.

officials and those of London, one is struck by the fact that there is a marked increase in the number of communications which passed from one body to the other during the later years of the rule than in the earlier. This would seem to imply, at first glance, that there was a closer connection between the city and the court at this time. There are, however, two other circumstances which had much to do with this enlarged correspondence, and which consequently tend to diminish the impression that a greater interest was manifested on the part of the royal officials for the city at one time than at another. In the first place, a new official, the Remembrancer, was added to the municipality in 1577. A part of his duty consisted in preserving the official letters and other documents sent to the city, as well as a copy of every letter sent by the London officers. Thus it is that for the later years we have additional sources of information. For the earlier years, until the *Repertory*—the record of the proceedings of the court of aldermen—is published, the *Calendar of State Papers* and the *Acts of the Privy Council* constitute the principal means by which we can become familiar with the correspondence between the two bodies. After the year 1577 the increase may be due, not so much to the number of letters actually written, as to the number now accessible.

But, aside from this consideration, that more letters did pass between the city and the court for the later period is largely due to the personality of two men conspicuous in the life of the two places. Lord Burghley, active and interested in the least detail regarding the welfare of the kingdom, had an equally active associate in Fleetwood, the loquacious recorder of London. The letters, or rather diaries, sent by the latter to the great statesman are filled with matter of interest pertaining to the governmental and social life of the city. Had there been men of like temperament at the head of affairs in the city and the kingdom, it is probable that there might have been an equally large number of letters written for the earlier as for the later period.

During the century and a quarter we are considering there

is a growth of independence on the part of the citizens of London. This is especially noticeable in their actions with regard to the loans which were demanded by the Tudor sovereigns. With the exception of the amicable loan of 1525, the demand of which was met with so much opposition, not only in London, but throughout the country, that it was consequently withdrawn, when money was desired by either Henry VII or VIII, the citizens, though grumbling, usually made the desired grant without delay. Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, however, the city refused to grant any money to the queen without the security of carrack goods, or the promise of income from the export and import duties on all goods passing through London.

The change in the attitude of the crown towards offending officers of the city shows that the increase in the independent spirit of the people was recognized by the court officers. The high-handed manner in which Henry VII extorted money from the rich middle class brought about much complaint from certain aldermen and other persons prominent in London. The persons guilty of such misdemeanors were instantly imprisoned by the order of the king. From 1495 to 1509 Sir William Capell, alderman, who was sheriff in 1504 and mayor in 1503 and 1509, was frequently in conflict with the king.¹ On the latter date he was sent to the Tower, after having been imprisoned first in the counter and later in the sheriff's house. There he was compelled to remain until the death of Henry, when, "with many others, he was freed." It does not appear from the chronicle that these men were given a trial before imprisonment. In Henry VIII's time the mayor and aldermen were reprimanded for the insurrection which occurred on the Evil May Day, but other than that they were not required to suffer any punishment. At the time of the rebellion of Essex, the sheriff, Sir Thomas Smith, who was suspected of being in league with the earl, was, after his trial by the court officials,² handed over to the court of aldermen for punishment.³

¹Fabyan, *Chronicle*, 685, 689, 690.

²C. S. P., 1589-1601, 570.

³Camden, *Britannia*, 609.

In the same way the attitude of the city regarding the royal interference in municipal elections points to this increase in the spirit of independence. Elizabeth's withdrawal of a suit on two separate occasions regarding appointment to office in the city is in striking contrast with a step taken by her father at an earlier period. The citizens in 1535 attempted to deprive an appointee of the king of the office of measurer of cloth, claiming that by right of charter the privilege belonged to them. The overbearing mastery of Henry VIII is apparent when he insisted that not only should the man be reinstated, but that all the profits of the office during the time he was deprived of it should be restored to him, and that a heavy fine should be placed on those who should hinder him in the fulfilment of his duties. In 1580, though Elizabeth insisted upon granting the proceeds of this office to one of her choice, she yielded a point to the city by withdrawing a request that a certain man be granted the office of water bailiff. The final victory of the city in the contest waged between the court of aldermen on one side, and Lord Burghley, Lord Walsingham and Elizabeth on the other, from 1580 to 1583, shows plainly how strong was the effort made by the Londoners to hold what they believed to be their privileges. Finally, the mild tone of the two letters sent by the privy council to London in the closing years of the sixteenth century, regarding the office of ganger, reveals the fact that the court was aware of the spirit prevalent in the city. These, as well as the positive acts of refusal on the part of the court of aldermen to agree to appoint persons chosen by the crown, are indices of that tenacity of purpose which became so conspicuous a characteristic of the Londoners of the succeeding century, and point to their city as the school in which was taught the principle of resistance which became so great an indication of the spirit of the Englishmen of the Stuart period.

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DRAMAS.

Many of the Elizabethan dramas throw light upon the life in the city. A few of the plays in which the life of the apprentice is shown are

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I have not attempted in the foregoing list to give anything like an exhaustive account of the books dealing with London in the Tudor period. I have simply named those works which have been of service to me in my study of the Lord Mayor and aldermen. The sameness of many of the secondary books is due to the fact that the authors have largely followed Stow and Maitland, to the exclusion of other sources, in their endeavor to picture London of Shakespeare's day.



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Wm. T. Bond
Judge Peris

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